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MYSTERY OF MIRACLES

A SCIENTIFIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATION

BY

JOSEPH WILLIAM REYNOLDS, M.A.

PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, LONDON; VICAR OF ST. STEPHEN, SPITALFIELDS

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THAT WE MAY
JOIN MORE READILY IN COMMON SERVICE OF THE GREAT MASTER,
AND BE GATHERED MORE HAPPILY
INTO ONE FAMILY AS CHILDREN OF GOD.

JOSEPH WILLIAM REYNOLDS.

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VERITAS MAXIMA CARITAS.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

"Negligentia mihi videtur, si postquam confirmati sumus in fide, non studemus quod credimus intelligere."—ANSELM.

"We must have reason and science as our allies, if the world is to be won for Christ."—*Quarterly Review*, January, 1881.

AS a student of physical science, and having much in common with those who are exclusively and professionally devoted to its pursuit, I greatly regret that some, with no little ostentation, refuse and misrepresent our most holy and revealed Religion. They do this with dogmatic presumptuous assertion, utterly unbecoming men the very nature of whose pursuits should render them not less humble-minded than careful.

Scientific men, generally, are worthy of all praise for skilful self-denying labour; and merit high honour because of their noble character and beneficent work. To these I renew the respectful dedication of this book. By some of them a scientific and philosophical proof of miracles is deemed impossible, therefore—

> "Let us once again assail your ears,
> That are so fortified against our story."
>
> *Hamlet.*

The proof afforded in the following pages is cumulative. Every Thought enters new regions, new experiences, and encounters new difficulties. Every part is so far complete in itself as not to be bound to another by

any outward formal order; but the thinker will find that various doors, passages within and windows looking without, render the whole a habitation of intelligence; and the reader is called upon continually to exercise his own speciality of reason. A few of the Thoughts, for the sake of completeness, contain a repetition of somewhat similar arguments.

Hearty thanks are due to those critics who so indulgently received the first edition. Their comments have been profited by. Two new Thoughts—"Elimination of Chance from the Universe" and "Miracles of the Present Day"—have been added to this edition. The titles of six others, XII., XIII., XIV., XV., XXVIII., XXIX., have been altered. I am grateful to various friends for suggestions and help. Special thanks are due to the Reverend Charles C. Collins, M.A., Vicar of St. Mary Aldermanbury, London, for revising the proof sheets; and to the Reverend James Gylby Lonsdale, M.A., Woodleigh, Mayfield, Sussex, formerly Professor of Classical Literature in King's College, London, whose ripe scholarship, accurate as wide, enabled me to enrich this edition with more gems of classic lore than my own unaided memory, of late much exercised in scientific investigation, could afford.

There is a mystery and there is a power in all natural processes of which scientific men are conscious, but not able to explain. A power always active—a mystery ever present—

". . . 'twill blossom soon,
Although 'tis leafless now."

"A moment—and thou sinkest to rest!
To wake perhaps an angel blest,
In the bright presence of thy Lord."

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THE

MYSTERY OF MIRACLES.

WHAT AND WHY I THOUGHT.

"Crede mihi non est parvæ fiduciæ, polliceri opem decertantibus, consilium dubiis, lumen cæcis, spem dejectis, refrigerium fessis. Magna quidem hæc sunt, si fiant; parva, si promittantur. Verum ego non tam aliis legem ponam, quam legem vobis meæ propriæ mentis exponam: quam quis probaverit, teneat; cui non placuerit, abjiciat. Optarem, fateor, talis esse, qui prodesse possim quamplurimis."*—PETRARCH, *De Vita Solitaria.*

MY former work, "The Supernatural in Nature," gave a general yet actual verification of miracles such as cannot be weakened unless most of our present science is proved to be inaccurate. That verification, however, owing to the comprehensiveness of the argument, could not combine scientific precision with great brevity; and I have been urged to give in a new form, separate from

* "Believe me, it requireth no little confidence to promise help to the struggling, advice to the doubtful, light to the blind, hope to the dejected, refreshment to the weary. These indeed are great things, if done: trifles, if only promised. I, however, do not so much prescribe a law to others, as of my own mind set forth a law: which, let him who shall approve, abide by; and let him, who approveth not, reject. I confess that I could wish to be such a one as might benefit as many as possible."

any special reference to Holy Scripture, a concise proof of miraculous operation in the world; operation sometimes effectuated by use of natural means, sometimes without any apparent means whatever.

I respectfully present "What I Thought" as helpful towards the scientific and philosophical solution of a problem which perplexes many minds. I endeavour to show that miracles are the source and foundation of Nature, underlie all science, are everywhere and interpenetrate all things; that the abnormal and eccentric are not only possible but actual; that the mystery of miracles is only another more secret form of the many mysteries with which men of science are already familiar; mysteries in marvels of human consciousness, in natural symbols, in the interactions, co-operations, counteractions of cosmic energies.

Fear existed that clear, calm, accurate thinking, high capacity and attainment in pure science, not only hindered spiritual worship, but rendered men of grand intelligence actually incapable of the child-like faith and reverence so continually enforced in Holy Scripture. The fear is passing away. We know that whatever is opposed to reason is certainly much more opposed to God. Scientific men, after long voyages, and many wandering contemplations of Nature, like Fichte and Schelling, take assured course for the home with God; like Newton and Kepler, delight in prayer. Highest reason and purest faith may therefore unite in the same intellect, and light spring from each for the guidance of both, their combined brightness being the illumination of a perfect man. Possessors of science ought not to be narrowed, with souls only in the bud, as if natural laws

left no room in the universe for superphysical energies. Scientists know that visible nature is the outer form of inner powers—the material habitation for many existences—the clock to strike hours—the pendulum to measure space for intelligences—the school for faith, patience, discernment, that man may rightly fulfil the purpose of his being.

The most capable of our theologians know that Reason and Faith are wedded by Divine ordinance, and that divorce were a shame to both. Faith not only reveals the grandeur of Jacob's ladder by which we climb to heaven, but comforts our walk on earth withal; Reason leads through Nature to a house of God, to worship of the Deity; and guides to things within the veil, explaining the difference between sobriety and madness, between fools and wise.

Reason and faith thus united, pure science and child-like trust combined in the same intellect, Piety, knowing that her beauty is most attractive in clear light, kindles her golden lamp at the bright flame of sanctified intelligence. Holy Scripture ceases to be an imperfect manuscript, with broken periods and letters effaced; and Nature is no more a barren land—

> "Every bush and tufted tree
> Warbles sweet philosophy."
>
> HEBER.

Sparks of knowledge, then, struck out by the smiting of our intellect on the hard things of existence, are not, whatever an atheistic evolutionist may assume, the aspirations of a beast, carried forward and kindled in the human soul; nor, as boasters of heredity assert, the light that comes from dead men—the surviving ghostly

thoughts of former generations; but living scintillations from reason at the heart of things, which ever sparkle afresh in new generations of men, and by which high natures become acquainted with truth and righteousness.

We are aware that our age is the era of great discoveries, and, probably, the eve of astounding marvels. If the phonograph, the spectroscope, the electric light, are given; why cannot water be made an available fuel, sunlight be retained for use in the night, and the refuse of coal-tar be converted into quinine? We already manufacture various gems well-nigh undistinguishable from those of Nature; why should not the diamond particles, lately fashioned by the chemist, become jewels of magnitude; and the dream of alchemists be realized —lead turned into gold—from which it differs less than iron ore from Whitworth's compressed steel? These, and yet greater discoveries, would not be miracles, but new revelations of Nature's secrets, small forces from the Power by which miracles are wrought, showing that the strange imaginings of past ages were not mere bundles of error.

Unbelievers discern, from feelings at work in their own heart, how the intensity of passion and truth in the bosom of Brutus enabled him to behold a mysterious vision on the eve of the notable battle of Philippi. Men of sins and sorrows admit that, if the witch of Endor cannot bring a Samuel from the spirit-land, Saul may, nevertheless, in the subjectiveness of his own mind, see spectres and hear messages from the great deep. These are not necessarily Divine Revelations. They may come naturally from realms that seem far off, but are really nigh. Life—vegetative, animated, intelligent, emotional

—forms a series, not merely of progressive atomic condensations in organisms, but of subtler essences carried upward and onward to nobler beings. In flowers are seeds that do not perish when petals fall into the dust. In animals are germs by which old nature again is young. In men, thought and spirit, dominating lower life, direct animal action and control the minds of other embodied intelligences. Why not influence the disembodied, and why not be reacted upon? Our knowledge is growing, and we possess at least some powers of the world to come (Heb. vi. 5). The pure and spiritually intellectual put forth those finer shoots, which enter new and grander existence; while the spirit of higher things has a constant tendency to human nature, to refine our flesh and blood—become part of our ordinary intelligence and the enrichment of experience (2 Pet. i. 4).

> "Est ne Dei sedes nisi terra et pontus et aer
> Et cœlum et virtus?"
>
> LUCAN. ix. 578.

To the statement of "What I Thought," it seems well to add "Why I Thought."

The germ of the present attempt to verify miracles was of curious conception. The writer had been reflecting that, some time or other, the idea must have sprung up amongst man's ordinary thoughts, that the mind within him is a witness of the Mind manifested in nature. It would be a great thought—the unity of all being, the connection of human life with the life of the universe, the laws of all realms in mutual correspondence. He would feel that his efforts to do right, and resist wrong, were a sort of counterpart to the conflicting powers of the world; that light and darkness, pleasure

and pain, life and death, represented the good and evil sides of existence. At first, supposing there was no Divine Revelation, he might have an intense conviction that evil could not be overcome: then experience taught him that he was not only able to conquer some of the evil things, but actually to make them good. After this, the conviction arose that it was possible for some one, like but better than himself, to vanquish all evil. Hence would spring the idea of a holy perfect man—more than man.

The thought of the writer was at first troublous, and the old maxim—"Magna est veritas, et prævalebit"—seemed to fail before the intense, subtle, insinuating, destructive power of evil. After a while, his mind became placid. Little by little everything grew up out of the indistinct grey, as of early morn, into colour and life and movement. All matter teemed with vital instinct, atoms vibrated with immeasurable velocity of motion, the force entering and departing gave polarity of being. Assorting with like, some with unlike, they grew into molecules of radiant beauty, new powers, complex motions. Then the world sparkled with crystals, the metals crept forth, the process being wrought by light, soft, continuous, increasing. The mystic union and interaction found voice in low sweet lisping, the germ of all future speech. Nothing was still, nor silent; the music and the motion entranced; but as yet there was no life like that in plant, or in living creature.

Not even an angel could discern how, without will of atom or molecule, there was movement. Not in line or path of crystallization, but by power forming nucleus which had no cell, to be a fountain self-contained, went forth the miracle of life in grass and herb and tree.

Separated by intervals of degree and kind, rather than of space and time; of lively, complex, spiral movement; of wheel within wheel; animal life began—of brighter automatism, of conscious sensation, of self-possession. Waters swarmed, the earth brought forth, the air teemed; life was by life, kind after kind. Eye could not see, nor ear hear, when, or how, or why, there was beginning, continuance, change, mingling, ceasing to be. From little to great, from simple to complex, from low to high degree, went mystical advance. Within the nature, weaving living tissues into patterns wonderful and rare, dwelt a principle unseen indeed, but manifest by the instinct of creatures which had no thought, and, yet, were guided as by a perfect mind. This life, and the precedent vegetable life, were mutually sustentative, yet distinct; every life by its own life, kind after its kind; the vegetative apart from conscious existence.

Then with more consciousness of growth—though not growth, but a different separation, a higher nature, by operation welding perfecting all hitherto living nature into a form of might, of beauty, of intelligence, came man—the Son of God! The frame fashioned was erect, unlike all other—naught else received breath Divine.

> "Os homini sublime dedit, cœlumque tueri
> Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus."
>
> OVID, *Metam.*, i. 85.

The clothing was of purity—not hairy garment, nor leafy covering. The gait—divinely graceful—

> "Divini signa decoris
> Ardentesque notate oculos; qui spiritus illi,
> Qui vultus vocisve sonus, vel gressus eunti."
>
> VIRGIL, *Æneid*, v. 647.

". . . in their looks divine
The image of the glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure
(Severe but in true filial freedom placed),
Whence true authority in men."

MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, iv. 291.

To Him was given lordship which received a ready homage from every living thing, and all around was paradise.

Some noise aroused the thinker—the muser—the dreamer—whatever he was, from the pictured thought; and he saw, indeed, a tremulous vibration, many moving gorgeous colours, formed by light passing through a stained-glass window, where had been portrayed the image of Christ our Lord. The thinker had seen a wonderful truth: all nature, all life, of God: men of faith live, move, have their being in Him: "ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα Θεοῦ γενέσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ" (John i. 12).

I humbly state what and why I thought, that my brethren may trust God more, and profit by experience. Are we to doubt for ever? Science, alone, cannot content us. How pitiable is the condition of some who in science possess renown, but for whom shines no glorious immortality, whose best hope is—extinction! Culture, apart from piety, is not enough: the Chinese, in some respects, are most cultured people, with life and morals steeped in pollution. Some ancient nations possessed mental power, brightness of genius, skill in art, unto which we moderns have not attained—yet, serving the creature more than the Creator, they perished. We must listen to the Voice of Nature, to the Word of God. The Voice and Word are not silent: Nature's music, set

to words in Scripture, form a melodious psalm of life. "Sœculi pulchritudo, velut magnum carmen cujusdam modulatoris, ducens in æternam contemplationem speciei Dei" (S. Augustine).

Men of high capacity enter two regions of thought: in one, science, they are bold inquirers and sceptical reasoners; in the other, religion, they possess an inspiration and consolation, a beauty and power, which render them glad thanksgivers, obedient worshippers. They regard the outstretched sky as a canopy of love, and are sure that glories of every kind will illumine the Cross they bear on earth.

Other men, of lower sort, unwisely make the doubt, meant for discipline, their constant portion. They go out weakened to meet life's sorrow, unarmed to earth's battle, and encounter utter defeat. They forget that the greater and more numerous the organic similarities between man and beast, the richer and more distinctive is the inner treasure with which men are endowed. The beast is capable of little growth, man of infinite improvement. "The dog is ashamed when caught thieving, that is, he is afraid of blows; man is ashamed of himself." The illuminating centre of self-consciousness in man is the persuasion of a purpose in his life, of a moral power in his being, which give priceless value and eternal meaning to his existence.

> "So close is glory to our dust,
> So near is God to man—
> When duty whispers low, 'Thou must,'
> The youth replies, 'I can.'"
>
> EMERSON.

Holy Faith has been proved again and again by the

best, why doubt we with the worst? It is time that we listen to God, and listening obey; with thankfulness receive His gifts, with gladness use them; so shall we find a preciousness everywhere. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jer. xxix. 11).

THOUGHT I.

THE DENIAL OF MIRACLES IS UNSCIENTIFIC.

"In my opinion profound minds are the most likely to think lightly of the resources of human reason, and it is the most superficial thinker who is generally strongest in every kind of unbelief. The deep philosopher sees chains of causes and effects so wonderfully and strangely linked together, that he is usually the last person to decide upon the impossibility of any two series of events being independent of each other."—DAVY, *Salmonia.*

"History without God is as Polyphemus without his eye."

THE position of Spinoza, maintained by materialists—"Miracles are impossible, there is no transcendental beginning; for God and Nature are one, from eternity to eternity"—must now, as we possess more accurate science, be abandoned.

Miracles are creative acts of God, supernatural operations in Nature's domain, new things of which unaided Nature is incapable. A little consideration shows that the statement—"Miracles are impossible"—cannot be maintained: it is a guessing at the unknown, a pure negative extending over all time, space, circumstance, and incapable of scientific verification.

The assertion—"There is no transcendental beginning"—assumes that Nature can maintain itself, that the primal matter potentially contains all forces and laws,

is able to develop itself infinitely, and that, by some necessary process of involution and evolution, from those first germs were formed whence proceeded successive higher forms of life in vegetable and animal until man appeared. This further assumes that, even before evolution began, Nature was, in itself, eternally complete: for want of completion in any part renders the whole, to that extent, imperfect, and every act of growth a partial beginning. Nature would move in a series of recurring cycles, in which is neither first nor last, beginning nor end; she would merely repeat herself. Such an assumption is incapable of verification. It guesses at the unknown material world by means of the known; confers, upon that unknown, powers which the known does not possess; and then denies to both that transcendental beginning without which the known, so far as physical science is concerned, could have no origination, nor development, nor change—no number of likes being able to produce an unlike. It professes to account for all past and future possible combinations by existing mechanical arrangements, though these mechanical arrangements are mathematically proved to have arisen from unlike former conditions, which they were incapable of producing, and to be now tending towards extinction.

The two rash negatives are followed by a bold positive—"God and Nature are one from eternity to eternity." This positive is essentially weak on the negative side; that God was never a separate Existence, nor apart from Nature, does not, never did, never can exceed Nature, is utterly incapable of proof. "Non tam olim mundus quam olim Deus" (S. Augustine). God and nature may be one, in the sense that man and his work

are one; but nature is not eternal and God is. The affirmative side is not more accurate: for to say that our conception and knowledge of God and Nature are so all-containing and assured that nothing in heaven or earth escapes us; and that everything in the past, the present, the future, may be thus comprehensively formulated—"God is *natura naturans*, and Nature is *natura naturata*; God was never without the world, and the world is God;" shocks our common sense—"sensus moresque repugnant."

In contrast with such boastful statements concerning God and the world, and in proof that even a small part of that world cannot be fully searched out, take littles to measure the great. No one can tell the secret of atomic obedience in the familiar changes from ice to steam; nor the acting law of the pressures and resistances which a flying bird encounters, all around, from the atmosphere; nor are the forces at work in our finger nail, or in our hairs, or in the hair of a nettle, scientifically understood. The entomologist, Pierre Lyonnet, devoted many years to the study of one insect, *Phalæna cossus*, a caterpillar which infests the willow tree. The book, describing and figuring it, is a quarto volume of more than six hundred pages, adorned with eighteen plates. The number of muscles alone, all described and figured, is four thousand and forty-one. The labour, nevertheless, did not acquire all the knowledge; nor does the book narrate all that is to be narrated; nor do the plates, nor the muscles described and figured, reveal more than a small part of the mystery and the wonder contained in that one insect.

A further fact—every event, even the most trifling, is so complicate and multiform in its antecedents, that it is impossible to state the real cause of anything; we,

therefore, repudiate the following inaccurate and presumptuous statement:—"Miracles, or the intervention of the Deity in human affairs, are, to the scientific thinker, *a priori*, so improbable, that no amount of testimony suffices to make him entertain the hypothesis for an instant." This assertion is utterly unscientific, and based upon pure ignorance. Indeed, so far are we from being able to explain all things without God, whose foreseeing wisdom is conscious of Himself and of His action in creating and ruling the world, that we cannot give an exhaustive scientific statement of the continuous behaviour of the acting energies of any three masses, or force-points, in any cubical quarter-inch of force-locus, animate or inanimate, in air, or earth, or sea, for one minute preceding or following any moment that man may select. As to miracles, it is certain that the present state of things is derivative—is not what it originally was, the whole pomp of stars and all the variety of life having been originated. There is nothing so firmly established as the miraculous: nature, on the whole, and in every part, is a splendid miracle. The universe is proved, on mechanical principles, to have had a beginning in a state of things where and when the laws known to us were not in being; nor could have been originated therein except by energy from without. Professor P. G. Tait states ("Recent Advances in Physical Science," p. 26), "All portions of our science, and especially that beautiful one the Dissipation of Energy, point unanimously to a beginning, to a state of things incapable of being derived by present laws (of tangible matter and its energy) from any conceivable previous arrangement,"—the beginning was miraculous.

The beginning of nature was miraculous, so also is the continuance. Professor Huxley said, at the opening of Sir Josiah Mason's College, "Nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes." Such a statement, even if true, can never be verified; and, as it is not less opposed to science than it is disproved by fact, ought not to have been made. Nature, really, is that expression of definite, ever progressing order in which no time and no place are without interference, and in which everything exists for the sake of something else. Nature is that sphere wherein all the visible came from the invisible into which it is returning; the invisible ever interfering with the visible, the visible ever re-entering the invisible. Nature continues to be nature because of this everlasting interference: is that domain of ceaseless and universal change which, in no two consecutive moments of time, nor in any two points of space, ever was or ever will be exactly the same. Every force in every atom, in every moment, acts for ever and ever along a different line of direction and through a different place in space. Instead of Nature being that with which and within which nothing interferes, it is that in which and with which everything interferes, the constitution and continuance of nature are based upon interference. The highest intellects in the world well know this, and that no branch of science—not even that of involution and evolution, which some pervert to ungodly use—could exist apart from this interference;—an interference well ordered and sure. Scientific men plainly tell mankind that selfishness, impurity, and vice curse the world; but that when true religion everywhere prevails the wreathed surges of oceans of misery, the massy dark undulations

of poverty and toil, will melt into a widespread clear reflection of beautiful order in which man will be as king. "Da Fidei quæ Fidei sunt."

> "Hail, universal Lord! be bounteous still
> To give us only good; and, if the night
> Have gathered aught of evil, or concealed,
> Disperse it, as new light dispels the dark."
>
> MILTON, *Paradise Lost.*

We have established our argument—"the denial of miracles is unscientific." The assertion that they are impossible is simply absurd. Only by them can we account for the world's present mechanical arrangement: both origin and continuance are from unlike former conditions. To say—"there is no God"—denies Divinity, yet attributes it to matter, energy, space. To assume that God and Nature are one from eternity to eternity, imputes Godhead to every particle of matter. To teach that Nature is without interference, contradicts the most established and universal of scientific facts: Nature exists and continues to exist by means of ceaseless and universal interference. Science affirms the greatest of all miracles—a Beginning, a Creation—in which an arranged all-pervading dependence, and an ever-acting yet ever-changing adaptation and correlation of the parts with the whole and of the whole with the parts, prove that the whole is a splendid aggregate of miracles.

THOUGHT II.

NATURALISM AND SUPERNATURALISM.

"Our notions of what is natural will be enlarged in proportion to our greater knowledge of the works of God and the dispensations of His providence."—BISHOP BUTLER.

"Miracles upon earth are nature in heaven."
JEAN PAUL RICHTER.

NATURALISM, maintaining that the laws of matter, of space, of energy, either had no beginning, or began and exist by their own originative and continuative power, is convicted of inadequacy. It professes to explain, by the limited measure of human intellect and the inaccuracy of human knowledge, that infinitude which can neither be measured nor fully known. It says, "There was nothing before matter, there is no existence apart from it, there will be nothing after it. Matter, driven by force within space, is the whole of nature." Lucretius said the same long ago (i. 430)—

"Præterea nihil est, quod possis dicere ab omni
Corpore sejunctum, secretumque esse ab Inani,
Quod quasi tertia sit rerum natura reperta."

"All within is mechanism, but there is no mechanic; and outside of it is no being—no life." Such a theory narrows the universe into a mechanical system, and makes human

experience and conception a limit of possibility. So great is the ignorance of those who maintain the mechanical theory, that they cannot draw, even as to objects of appreciable magnitude, much less in the indescribably minute, an accurate line between the conscious and the unconscious; nor are they sure whether the minimum force-locus is a solid atom, or a point without parts—that is, a finite minimum having parts, or a point having position and no parts. It is really too bad that secularists, positivists, materialists, who cannot write down with proof the scientific expression of any three different laws continuously at work from point to point, from moment to moment in the universe, should weary us with their sickening pretences to universality of knowledge—the old claim of Grecian sophists, whose "omniscience was their foible." It is reported of one that he seemed to say, "Here I am, the high priest of Nature, to interpret all her secrets." We will not assert, with Thomas Penyngton Kirkman, that their variety of expressions and decorations of sophisms move in "a donkey's circle;" but we adopt his words as to the theories—"They are merely the rags that hang, not sweetly, on the shivering flanks of Ignorance."

Dr. Samuel Clarke stated, nearly two centuries ago, "The terms, nature, powers of nature, course of nature, and the like, are nothing but empty words, and signify merely that a thing usually comes to pass." Properly, "the only distinct meaning of the word natural is stated, fixed, settled." We may argue in fashion of Butler's "Analogy," that "what is natural as much requires and presupposes an Intelligent Mind to render it so—that is, to effect it continually or at stated times—as what is supernatural

or miraculous does to effect it for once." A miracle, then, is unusual divine action; natural law is habitual divine action. In a world containing free creatures, both kinds of action are essential; otherwise freedom is not freedom. The natural is, indeed, a continual miracle; but being prolonged, its supernaturalism is not noted by the common observer. "Omnia miraculis plena sunt, sed assiduitate vilescunt" (S. Augustine).

Supernaturalism maintains that even the atoms march in tune—as if the music had been set at concert pitch; and that the commonest substances in nature, moving to the rhythm of law, are a miracle of beauty wrought by some Wonder Worker. Supernaturalism asserts the facts, which our experience is continually enlarging, that we for ever discover within ourselves and nature new potencies, new laws, new operations, new combinations; and that the stages preceding nature and human life were preparations for later developments, man being in correlation with nature. Hence, it follows that nature and man are teleological developments of potencies in a precedent state; and we are bound by the law as to continuity of energy to regard them as constituent parts in a process of adjustment for some succeeding state.

Again—Nature, on the objective side of material existence, shows that the meanest of living things share our earthly pedigree, are all, not the Incas only, "souls of fire and children of the sun."

> "Igneus est ollis vigor et cælestis origo
> Seminibus."
>
> VIRGIL, *Æneid*, vi. 730.

Nature, on the inner or subjective side—we say inner

and subjective, for we view most of it mentally, no mortal eye looking on the work—shows that the solid matter of our woods, our rocks, our own organisms, existed formerly in a state wholly invisible, and afterwards appeared as semi-transparent gas, with atoms and molecules attracting and repelling: so that existing forms, inorganic and organic, are visible expressions of marvellous, precedent, invisible, ethereal, complicate, molecular action and interaction. These objective and subjective sides of existence are as the concave and convex lenses, used in our process of microscopic and telescopic investigation; or, better still, the objective corresponds with our bodily eye; the subjective with our inner sense; whereby we discover that things are not in inner form as they outwardly seem, nor were formerly as they now are, nor are as they will be. Whether we regard the universe in its causal or physical aspect, in its cognitive or mental aspect, it suggests the idea that there is the Material Universe, and that there is a Mind. From this truth we pass to another—our mind possesses in the same manner and as fully, even by medium of the five senses, though they exclude a great deal and distort much of what they allow to pass, not less clear manifestations of Supreme Mind in the universe than it discovers of human mind by means of human works.

Observe those fern-like forms which, on a frosty morning, overspread your window-panes. By breathing on one of the panes, dissolve the solid crystalline film to a liquid condition, then watch: so soon as you cease breathing, the film—by action of secret forces—seems to be alive (a common magnifying glass shows it very beautifully), lines of motion radiate, molecule closes with

molecule, until the whole film passes from the liquid state to crystalline repose. In all this we do not discern the permanent reality. What we are conscious of, as to matter and motions of matter, are but subjective affections which we think are produced by objective agencies.

These straight lines, curves, definite arrangements of particles, by polar and other forces, in exquisite structure, cannot be explained as caused by the separate independent attraction and repulsion of self-positing molecules: for structural, that is complex architectural and organic action, requires other, more and higher powers than the atomic and molecular. The difference and nature are wide apart as the structure of a stone and the construction of a palace; as fire-mist of the sky and finished worlds. This fact is overlooked by professors of naturalism, and it renders their theory incompetent to explain the universe as an organic whole. Atoms and molecules, far from being satisfied by mutual embrace, are by an energy distinct from them, but working in and through them, built up into the inanimate crystal, the living plant, the intellectual man, the wonderful equations and endless variety of worlds. These experiences unite to enable us to form a conception of something transcending all appearances; something independent of all change, possessing power like that of consciousness and intelligence, yet greatly exceeding them—ever permanent.

Carry scientific investigation to the beginning of things. Molecules assume visible form by means of polar and other forces. There is passage from the ultra-gaseous to the gaseous, from the gaseous to the

fluid, from the fluid to the solid, and imperceptible things become cloud-masses, become suns, planets, satellites, comets. Vegetable organisms are built up through the reduction of chemical compounds, and rounded off by hardly discernible shades of increasing vitality. Animal life exists by complicate reversals of reduction, and is perfected in the human organism. The process is not by atomic energy only, but by a directing, distributive, cumulating, constructive principle, essentially apart from the molecules themselves, but acting in and by them; for a process almost the same, and with materials well-nigh identical, weaves the texture of a frog and organizes man.

From these facts, Supernaturalism infers that nature is not without transcendental beginning; indeed there are many new and continual transcendent beginnings; transcendent because the varieties and ascending stages of existence are not wrought by one process of mechanism, and with one kind of material; but are the product of greater and varying energies continually flowing in to control and elevate lower forms and powers into those of nobler degree, and to renew and enlarge activities for attainment of higher organic completeness. There is a display of endless variety, a passing through new stages, an assuming of new forms, acquisition of new powers, adornment with new beauties. Every higher form of life has its peculiar laws which transcend those of the lower orders and cannot be explained by them. Nature awakes from the equilibrium of repose to the conflict of mechanical forces, thence to sensitive life, thence to intellectual activities, thence to the moral emotions of righteousness.

Nature may be termed the realization of God's ever-working will: "Heaven and earth have hearkened to His voice, and their labour hath been to do His will" (Hooker, "Eccl. Pol.," i. 3). Perfect in provisions for every possible event or combination of events, it requires no new or additional legislation, no acts to repeal, no acts to amend. "Mundus, cum creatus est, habuit quasi semen eorum omnium quæ nunc fiunt" (S. Augustine). Mechanical powers are not the only manifestation of energy. Life, intelligence, emotion, parts of the intra-mundane working, produce something which is not otherwise effected. We find the vital mental and emotional working upon the sensuous; the sensuous upon the mechanical; and, in some respects, we as clearly discern marks of superhuman intelligence in the far-reaching adaptation and constructive arrangements of nature, as we perceive the operation of our own intelligence in the productions of human art.

Physical and moral evil conflict with this beneficent Intelligence. We, ourselves, are consciously capable of good and evil. In and against the evil, we recognize an advance, or remedial process, in connection with a Power working for righteousness—

> "From seeming evil still educing good,
> And better thence again, and better still,
> In infinite progression."

The advance—whether physical or moral, by energies from within nature, or by energies from without—is not so much by the past containing the future, as by the subsequent retaining and exalting that which preceded; and the ascent warrants our intellectual and emotional conviction that, in due time, the universe will represent,

as in a glass, free from obliquity, speck and discolouring, the perfected work of One—

> "Whose voice is on the rolling air;
> We hear Him where the waters run;
> He standeth in the rising sun,
> And in the setting He is fair."

Science does not find that investigation renders the world less wonderful, all things mechanical, and men brutal. Gaining a firmer, fuller grasp of truth, she passes on the lamp of knowledge from generation to generation for illumination of the world, as a kingdom built up *in gloriam fidei in gloriam Dei.*

> "*καθάπερ λαμπάδα τὸν βίον παραδίδοντες.*"
>
> PLATO.

> "Nunc cursu lampada tibi trado."
>
> VARRO DE RE RUSTICA.

> "Et quasi cursores vitai lampada tradunt."
>
> LUCRETIUS, ii. 78.

> "*τὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς φέγγος λαμπαδευόμενον ἐπ' ἀλλήλοις διαδοχαῖς ἰσόχρονον γενήσεται Κόσμῳ.*"
>
> PHILO.

The strange story of a Progressing Kingdom, which all accept, the secularist believing in man, and the Christian believing in God, testifies to something more than a blind whirlpool or eddy of fate. The advance from slime and ooze is not by innumerable stages of mere mechanical ascent, not by casual improvement of brutes, but by entrance of creative, quickening, mental and moral influences, joint operations of will and might. The kingdom and progress are placed above doubt by their very nature and purity: for how could Folly fabricate a narrative or process of Wisdom? When and how

was it possible in a world which had no trace, nor sign, nor thought, nor consciousness of God, to fable of His Existence, of Righteousness, and of Judgment to Come?

Surely, those who go about in miscalculating unbelief, teaching a naturalness which is unnatural, are in great ignorance, and much in want of better employment. The vocation of high natures is to live, and to teach, a nobler life than that. Let the time past suffice for folly, and the future be given to truth. Accurate comprehensive thought shows that Nature is due to Eternal Infinitude, both as to space and time. Intelligible laws presuppose the existence of Intelligence, even as all existences are co-ordinated developments of former potencies. Whatever the marks of reason in human works, there is more comprehensive purpose in natural works. Atoms and molecules do not, of themselves, build the crystal, the plant, the animal; a directing, distributive, constructive principle, essentially transcending them, acts in and by them. Hence, Nature in its origin, its material substance; in its energy displayed by mechanical, chemical, vital, intellectual, emotional forces, is due to the Supernatural. Natural advance is hindered by manifold evils, but as the advance is ever and evermore a gain—a differentiating into more perfect use—we inhabit a kingdom in which all evil will ultimately be overcome. In the divine studies of it, there is something that brings peace and light to the mind, something which preserves and embalms even the beauty of the body. "The Grecians most divinely have given to the active perfection of men a name expressing both beauty and goodness, καλογαθία" (Hooker, "Eccl. Pol.," i. 8). Everything murmurs a truth—"Thou art no longer only

a part of that which withers and decays. Thou art no machine of clay—moved by a spring, to be trodden into the mire which thou didst tread. Thou belongest to a vast universal process: not only to the matter—rather to the essence and spirit of things hast thou kindred and alliance."

THOUGHT III.

INNER IMPULSE TO THE MIRACULOUS.

". . . from higher to higher:
As mounts the heavenward altar-fire."

"The old distinction between the natural and the supernatural is an unfounded one, because all nature is but the coming to the birth of the Divine Life which lies embosomed in nature."—THOMAS GRIFFITHS, *Studies of the Divine Master.*

OH, the peace and joy of having attained some blessed height, in surety of faith, whence to look undismayed on all that history, that criticism, that science may discover!

"Sed nil dulcius est bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena."
LUCRETIUS, ii. 7.

We may attain that height; possess faith, unshaken by earth's convulsions; faith, enduring to life's end, loving, trusting, reverencing—built on the knowledge that the clusters of imagination in Homer, Dante, Milton, Shakespeare; the light of reason in Socrates, Plato, Bacon, Newton; the Divinity in Moses, Isaiah, Daniel; were regenerating energies for the world.

Unbelievers are well aware, if acquainted with modern science, that natural phenomena or material existences are the raiment or visible appearance of some inner

invisible Power—a Master, a supernatural Power, by whose impulse they exist. Scientific men are almost unanimous that matter is not "force," but "the condition of force"—an inner impulse giving externality. Æther is scientifically defined as an assemblage of vibrations—whether the definition is accurate or not, æther, as all other matter, is the externality of an unknown energy. Light comes by the marvellous vibrations of æther—two unseen clothings of invisible force which make other things visible. Sound propagates itself by means of atmospheric undulations—two unintelligent things used by intelligence for production of reasonable speech. It follows from all this, that there is not a particle of matter in the universe which we can either perceive or picture as it really exists. All science is built up of appearances which are not to be trusted if science is true. For example—bodies are not coloured, the appearance of colour is produced by motions or other changes in the uncoloured particles which compose the object perceived and the organism of the percipient. The great and lasting truth, underlying all appearance, is not an indefinable consciousness standing for an unknown and unknowable mode of being beyond consciousness; but that One by whom all things exist, into whose Energy all force returns, and in whom our intellect and emotion find content so far as we apprehend.

For matter to attract and light to shine without the medium of æther, and sound to be heard apart from undulations of the air, would be a miracle; yet the intellect, the inner spirit, is attracted, feels, sees, hears, when there is no light nor sound, nor objective reality; these facts are somewhat akin to the miraculous. The

doctrines, the mysteries, the hopes, mental and emotional powers, dealt with in Sacred Literature, are regarded by profane persons not as fictions or lies, but as destitute of any substantial or objective reality. They ignore the fact, that our mental and emotional consciousness is so true and substantial as to be the measure and gauge of even material being: the only things we know and can know immediately are our own sensations and ideas. Further—one and the same material perception excites different thoughts even in the same individual—much more in different persons: so that the very appearance of things is greatly of our own making. Nor is that all: many thoughts arise not connected with any external sensuous perception, we imagine things in which the five senses have no function. We attain, indeed, conception of the great truth—Mind creates matter, and without Mind matter cannot be. One of our poets truly writes, that even the human mind is somewhat creative—

> "Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,
> Which nature's admirable picture draws;
> And beautifies creation's ample dome.
> Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake,
> Man makes the matchless image man admires."
>
> *Night Thoughts.*

The fact is also forgotten, that it is equally impossible for the uncaused to exist either in mind or matter. Volition, conviction, faith—if they rest not on some ultimate reality—are an effect without a cause; which is absurd, or a miracle. Unbelievers as to miracles accept statements of this kind—"When He ascended the Mount of Transfiguration, a pure glow of inner splendour lighted up the Saviour's mind to a consciousness

of Divine Glory, and of the prophets' spiritual presence. Our Lord and His three disciples, looking within themselves, found the inward glow of heavenly radiance. That radiance might be automatic, or by a spontaneity quickened by great expectations in the Master and in the men; but could not possess objective reality."

If there be then a lighting up of the mind, an inner impulse to the supersensuous, to faith in and a conscious realization of the miraculous, without objective reality, we have a marvel indeed. Human intelligence and emotion could no more create the existing universal belief in and consciousness of Divinity, Heaven, Immortality, and of Divine Action, without something real whereon to rest the superstructure of the various religions in the world, than it can evoke visible material phenomena. Manifestly, our opponents' argument goes on unequal feet: there cannot be mental miracles, if physical marvels are impossible; we are not in vain filled with spiritual helps, comforts, strengths, from the rising till the setting sun; our nature does not contradict itself; and as no man can precisely fix the separating barriers between objectiveness and subjectiveness, between substance and essence, least of all materialists, we safely regard the inner universal impulse to the marvellous as an inwrought evidence of miracles. By this impulse we pray for the recovery of beloved ones who are at the point of death; we feel at the coffin of father, or of wife, that the bands of love are not sundered for ever; we seek for divine help that we may become holy and happy; and are sure that God's hand is leading us to glory.

The external and internal worlds are scenes of

perpetual changes, of which we see neither beginning nor end. If we entertain the hypothesis, as to the past, that all matter existed once in a diffused form, we find it impossible to conceive how this came to be so. When speculating on the future, a grand succession of phenomena is ever unfolding before us. Striving to find the essential nature of things, either in the past or in the future, we are at fault; nor can we, as to our own consciousness, remember the beginning—

> "For man to tell how human life began
> Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?"
> MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, viii. 250.

Nor are we able to examine our consciousness that at any present moment exists; for only that already past, never one which is passing, can become the object of thought. Goethe says, "Man is not born to solve the mystery of existence, but he must nevertheless attempt it, in order that he may learn how to keep within the limits of the knowable." Attempting it, we are brought, in every direction, face to face with the unknowable. An impenetrable mystery underlies all things—"omnia exeunt in mysterium." We find, nevertheless, that as ceaseless change is not possible without something eternally permanent, for we can only know motion as in contrast with fixity, or comparative fixity; so our intelligence discovers in all law—physical, vital, mental—a transcendent permanent eternal reality. In consciousness of this, our conscience makes a law for us: all promulgated laws are the work of individual consciences—a latent work carried on by heredity, and enduring through many centuries. Law implies responsibility, and ten thousand million convincing voices,

within and without, in this daily course of life and sin and mercy assert that there is a living God, and that we are responsible to a Ruler who knows that He is ruling, to a Worker who knows that He is working, to a Giver and Lover who knows that He is giving and loving.

In the light of this truth we read the pages of all religions; and taking Christianity, the only faith which has its origin, continuance, and enforcement in miracle, we find that perfect obedience to its tenets embodies all virtue, and whatever is best is safest, and the truest means to ensure our happiness. Inner Impulse to the miraculous, as we review our Thought, inspires with genius and enables with power. The earthly grade shows itself in deep and worthy love for whatever is better than ourselves. Our still rapture as we feel the influence of autumn sunsets, or listen to the symphonies of Beethoven, our consciousness that present joys are mere ripples of emotion compared with the vast movements on the ocean of reverence, of love, of beauty, is a real and true sense of Divine mystery. All outward physical nature is imbued with a sense of the Supernatural. Pass from the amphitheatre of glowing hill and fruitful vale, of broad forest-land and flowery garden, to crowds of rough men and weary-hearted women, even rudimentary religious culture raises their spirit above the sordid details of their narrow life, and suffuses their soul with a sense of the pitying loving Presence of Jesus —sweet and glowing as summer to the houseless wanderer—you thank Heaven for their faith and hope and love. These mental and spiritual marvels are real: they bind us to the skies more firmly and truly than do our bone and muscle to the earth. It is nature, yet

super-nature, that knits us by subtle web of intellect, blends yearnings of the heart, speaks in every cadence of our uttering, so that we know our Home is not here: a beneficent radiation in it brings what no money can buy—a power to keep from sin and be content with the will of God. We are not deluded by things of our own device; we no more create our consciousness of Divine action than we do of physical action. The mystery and change everywhere, the underlying permanence and law, make us feel that we have come here to learn, to have belief in right and wrong, and healthfully to strive that we may enter the broad daylight of God. So sure of this are we, that the promise is sweeter as this life is darksome and weary, the soul becomes more hungry when the body is ill at ease. There are some whom the lightning of misfortune blasts—only to intensify their inner impulse to be holy. Amidst all that humbles and scathes, in every strange defeature, they stand erect—we look upon them with less of pity than of love and reverence. There are passers through the Lazar House of Misery, but in their manger and straw is a majesty of God. Our inner impulse to the miraculous flings over acts of faith, though wrought in the meanest localities of earth, an emanation from the glory of Heaven. We have—

> "A King whom to afford
> Of service truly,
> Performed and duly,
> Is to bespeak eternity of bliss."
>
> GEORGE HERBERT.

THOUGHT IV.

WORLD WITHIN THE WORLD.

"Only in Reality lies the essence and foundation of all that was ever fabled, visioned, sung, spoken, or babbled by the human species; and the actual Life of Man includes in it all Revelations, true and false, that have been, are, or are to be."—THOMAS CARLYLE.

"The evidence of the senses is not stronger, ought not to be more convincing, than the evidence of the understanding. The eye of the mind may see as clearly, and judge as correctly, as the eye of the body."—REV. C. BENSON, *Hulsean Lecture*, 1820.

THE disposition with which nations and individuals are endowed by heredity from their ancestors, is moulded into character and receives outward form in daily behaviour, by their belief and will. Belief and will do not originate by chance, nor expand of themselves in the spirit. They are formed, voluntarily or involuntarily, by the operation of our consciousness on the experience of life. Belief in the miraculous is world-wide. The most powerful mover of the will, that which plays the greatest part in the history of the earth, that which animates to marvellous exertions, and furnishes brightest hopes and direst fears to heart and mind, is our sense of the Supernatural. There are sensations of awful dread, as

embodied in Coleridge's dark verse, that something not of earth is behind us; and there are bright experiences as of a spirit moving over us, filling the depths of our soul with a solemn mystery, creating new life.

How this sense could be quickened, the belief be excited, the will put in action, and moral obligations established, apart from miracles, marvels, deliverances, is a mystery. If there is no God, and men invented Him, men are able to fashion by thought a more wonderful Being and Existence than the universe either represents or contains—this, in itself, is creative and partakes of the miraculous. If there are no angels nor devils, no supernaturals nor miracles, men have pictured to themselves beings and operations the like of which cannot be found in heaven or earth: thus the world within is more marvellous than the world without. The invention of spirits, of supernatural marvels, of consciousness as to God, apart from an ultimate object, without even an antecedent, is a miracle.

We apply the thought.

If all causes and antecedents are material; if all being and existence are comprised in matter, force, space; how can the inner character and outer conduct of Hebrews and Christians be explained apart from those marvels on which their faith and history immovably rest? Experience proves that Revelation, embodied in the Old and New Testaments, has a power of entering our nature; of living in us, and becoming part of our ordinary intelligence; raising us to purer heights in knowing truth and doing good. Such a life is, like that of Sir Philip Sidney, poetry put in action. He who says, "The Bible, historical monuments, national institutions, public cere-

monies, lives of saints, heroic holy achievements, sublimest martyr-deaths, events of world-wide interest, transactions so majestic that all others become small in comparison, are based on delusive notions, are not realized truth, but flights of falsest fancy, and erections on groundless superstitions;" expects every man to be counted a liar—himself alone as true. Even so, how will this miracle of a man account for these notions, flights, superstitions, seeing that there is not even the shadow of a shade of reality in any of them; and in human nature no power of creating? We cannot move a limb without some substratum of fact; how, then, without the grain of mustard seed for reality, has the whole world been moved to faith in miracles? There must be a world within the world.

That, however, does not conform to the materialistic statement—"The external world is the only reality;" but every one, not a materialist, capable of accurate scientific thought, has been fully persuaded that there is an inner world. Every one: for reason far from extinguishing religion by a more gaudy light, adapts our eyes to the higher sacred lustre. The bonds of organic union, personality, and identity, which make man to be man, are not wholly physical; we possess states of consciousness and continually perform mental acts which testify of things immaterial—things utterly transcending and contrary to all that is possible in physics. When we give language to the stars, to the night a spell, and question the uncomprehended earth concerning the enigmas of life, we are not dreaming nor deluded men, we are sure—even when most baffled and bewildered—of a true unerring Wisdom.

The mind is at times apart from the body—so far as consciousness goes—

> "πῶς ἔνδον, εἶτ' οὐκ ἔνδον; ὀρθῶς ὦ γέρον.
> ὁ νοῦς μὲν ἔξω συλλέγων ἐπύλλια
> οὐκ ἔνδον."
>
> ARISTOPHANES, *Acham*, 372.

> "Peregre est animus sine corpore velox."
>
> HORACE, *Ep.* i. 12, 13.

We possess permanent mental and emotional states concerning things which, materially, are impossible; and seem to have means of knowledge transcending those called natural. All that we know has two faces: Mind, a floating succession of ideas; Matter, a floating consciousness of phenomena. Mill, in his "Logic," says, "The substance Body is the unknown cause of our sensations, the substance Mind is the unknown recipient." The passage from one to the other we cannot understand, nor explain how will acts upon the body; and every transfer from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous seems of a transcendental character—more inscrutable than the media influencing the translation of heat, light, electricity, magnetism, gravity.

The fact may be put in physiological form:—The development of the frontal lobes of the brain is greatest in those men who possess the highest intellectual powers. "Electrical irritation of the antero-frontal lobes causes no motor manifestations," says Dr. Ferrier ("Functions of the Brain," p. 287). "Though not motor, they are inhibitory motor, and expend their energy in inducing internal changes in the centres of actual motor execution." Consequently, the keys on which the anthem of high intelligence and emotion is played are the frontal

portion of the brain ; and the anthem is played—not by electrical, or physical, that is, mechanical irritation, but by an invisible musician—"the spirit of life."

Carry this a little further. Take a few words of the philosopher, Ueberweg: "What occurs in the brain, would, in my opinion, not be possible, if the process, which here appears in its greatest concentration, did not obtain generally, only in a vastly diminished degree." That is—there is a kind of life even in particles that are not organized. The flesh, which we eat, is not wholly dead ; the flour, which we bake, contains though weak and pale that which concentrated in the brain manifests highest living and intellectual powers. There may be minima of life going far below all that we possess any knowledge of, and maxima extending far beyond our every thought. Nevertheless, we cannot regard the particles of water, of albumen, of carbon, as possessing any sense or consciousness of life, they neither think nor feel ; all matter is not two-sided in the sense that conscious living matter is. "Things natural, which are not in the number of voluntary agents, do so necessarily observe their certain laws, that so long as they keep those forms which give them their being, they cannot possibly be apt or inclinable to do otherwise than they do" (Hooker, "Eccl. Pol.," i. 3). There is something in the character of high life and thought which does not wholly depend on the structure and substance of the material organs themselves: for though the brain substance, and even the mode of its nourishment, are similar in man and beast, the beast possesses no more than an irrational soul as vital principle, while man is enlightened by a rational spirit. Truly, the world within the world

is full and rich ; nor is it any paradox to assert—in the profundity are depths transcending all material limits. A miracle lies at the foundation of all matter, moves in everything that lives, and animates all intelligence.

Suppose we say, "Matter is eternal, and contains within itself the potentiality of all worlds, life, intelligence, emotion ;" that seems a less reasonable begging of the question than to say, "God is Eternal." Less reasonable, and a greater miracle! We give to matter the attributes of mind and of life ; *de facto*, making it God, though we say there is no God. To postulate the eternity of matter, rather than the eternity of God, thereby postulates Divine Existence also—in degraded form—a Mind materially imprisoned : crawling in the smallest insect that creeps over a few feet of our little globe, or circling the sun in Jupiter and his satellites. The Christian's view is more beautiful and comprehensive : he knows not God in His essence, but as represented by imperfect yet analogous qualities in the creature, he can apprehend the splendid suns as sparkling foot-prints of the Creator's onward march, and know Him in Revelation as "the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."

"If matter is not eternal, its first emergence into being is a miracle beside which all others sink into absolute insignificance ;" "cur itaque facere non possit Deus, ut et resurgant opera mortuorum, cum sit major et excellentius ipse mundus miraculum ?" but unbelievers tell us—"That is unthinkable ;" "pretending," as Sir E. Beckett says, "to sweep away an entire branch or system of philosophy by dogmatically pronouncing it for no

reason at all 'unthinkable.'" Will they explain in what way the eternity of matter is more thinkable than the creation of matter? think out for us, and make it clear, that the sudden apocalypse of a material world out of blank nonentity is more unthinkable than the eternal existence of many or innumerable worlds? Until they perform the task, suppose we think a little for ourselves—It does not seem difficult, after all, to understand in a serviceable sort of way, that God made all things out of nothing, that, very long ago, there was a chaos in which all things were "without form and void"—"rudis indigestaque moles" (Ovid, "Metam.," i. 7). Then came that wonderful advance into light, life, and replenishing, recorded in the grand old Book which even the less-gifted men—those incapable of the faith that sublimes—regard as the sacred doctrine of scientific evolution.

It is not, however, necessary that we accept the doctrine of evolution—not even to the extent that science affirms—our science is not final. We believe that the whole process is far more wonderful than the wisest can conceive. When fully known, the knowledge now possessed will seem as the groping of children in the dark. J. S. Buckminster says, "The dying believer leaves the children of mortality to grope a little longer among the miseries of a worldly life." Let us, meanwhile, be thankful for what we know, and our Thought on "World within the World" reveals:—Belief and Will are upon us and in us like a great flood, are not a device of our own, but bear us on to a new world. Belief in miracles is not a delusion. They come into Nature as by an operation like that with which we are shaken when a strong spirit enters our own weak body. We know of

brightnesses and true things in our own life, as the burning bush seen by Moses, very comings to us of God. There is also an inner world of which we are conscious. It makes us go about our work the happier, and feel that we are not far off a place beautified—such as the sun lights up for us in the waters, but more real. The two faces of all that we know are puzzles sometimes, and we are as one deposited sleeping among the ruins of a vast city; but, somehow, we awake and then comes the presence of a Love and Sympathy deeper and more tender than is breathed from earth and sky. Our intellect, too, has experience gained from amongst the sick and mourning, from minds hardened and shrivelled by poverty, a subtle perception of spiritual consolation able to brighten and beautify everything. Even the dead are not dead to us until forgotten—nor even then. Sometimes when alone, or our eyes are closed, or in the quiet night, we see and hear looks and voices almost plainer than when the beloved bodily forms were near and we touched them. Creation of matter may have been for the purpose of giving spirit grip of things, visible pictures of the ruin evil works, and of Invisible Mercy. Even words such as "light," "sound," "stars," "music," are signs of something unspeakably great and beautiful: so is it with everything in the world. The scientific view as far exceeds the common view, as that surpasses the fetichism of a savage; and beyond the horizon of scientific view is that unseen—that inexplicable—which comes near to our consciousness when we worship. Our spirit sees and hears mysterious sights and sounds, alas! all too soon withdrawn: and, yet, they make us happy. Nor is any man, of high and ripened

spirit, without that God-consciousness, of world v
the world, by which he has foretaste of things to
handsel of a growing change from glory to glory
Spirit of God. Now we see, but through a glass
we know, but only in part ; we shall see face to f
know even as we are known (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

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Nyssen says, "is neither in place nor in time . . . neither measured by ages, nor moving along with times;" yet, as Chrysostom states, "God is everywhere, I know; and that He is wholly everywhere, I know; but the how, I know not: that He is without beginning, ungenerated and eternal, I know; but the how, I know not." These are among the hidden things. Overhead, the infinite height with greater and lesser lights, bright-rolling, silent-beaming, placed by the Hand of Majesty; as if the small strophe of every human life, having such embellishment, was joined with the occasional verse of other existence, into some grand anthem, like Psalm civ., in praise of Creation—embracing all things, small and great, ending with glorious praise of Supernal Power.

Plato, in his "Phædon" (Jowett's translation, vol. i. pp. 465, 466), relates a saying of Socrates concerning that most mysterious and hidden of things, the spirit of man—"You may bury me if you can catch me!" Then he added with a smile of thought and tenderness—"Do not call this poor body Socrates. When I have drunk the poison, I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed. I would not have you sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the interment, 'Thus we lay out Socrates,' or 'Thus we follow him to the grave, or bury him.' Be of good cheer; say that you are burning my body only." Words of this kind are few. You cannot exact them from inferior men. Perennial spirit is only in thinking of the highest order, it reflects the light of God. Men of feeble faith seem conscious only of existence as an everlasting storm, which no one governs, wild, roaring, rushing torrent-wise, thundering down, then—swallowed

of oblivion. Not so swallowed up as to cease; for, though incapable either of fervent love to that which is good, or of ardent hatred against that which is evil, they still live on—dark now, darker hereafter; unless they turn to the light, and give themselves to God who gives all to them—

> "God's love hath to us wealth upheaped;
> Only by giving it is reaped.
> The body withers, and the mind,
> If pent in by selfish rind;
> Give strength, give thought, give deeds, give pelf,
> Give love, give tears, and give thyself;
> Who gives not is not living.
> The more we give
> The more we live."

For true are the words in the epitaph—

> "What I saved, I lost;
> What I spent, I had;
> What I gave, I have."

He who maintains that these things have no meaning; that every worm, toiling, spins in vain its own cocoon, everything is without knitted purport, and points to no reality; imagines that where his hand ceases to grope the world ends. He must be deaf to the Sacred Melody "from some blissful neighbourhood," well imagined by the poet Dryden as at the martyrdom of S. Catharine—

> "Æthereal music did her death prepare,
> Like joyful sounds of spousals in the air;"

and be blind not to discern that, in the world, God presents Himself to reason for recognition. He can only attain to that poorest of all philosophy, the mechanical,

and doubts of man's immortal being. Doubts, though upon other than walls of the Babylonian palace, the fingers of a hand come forth with mystic symbols from a distant world. He says, "Nature whirls round in endless Maelstroms, creating and swallowing itself;" whereas, 'tis only the god Saturnus, the French Revolution, and rats, that swallow their own children. Then he says, "We cannot picture out and arrange in our diagram of worlds, nor include within our philosophy, the Personal Infinite." As if we knew it not; "Deus simul apparet et latet; apparet specie, natura latet" (S. Augustine). He talks doubtfully of God, a may be God, no God. Infinite toil will not enable any man to sweep away the mist, but by ascending a little he may look over it altogether. An earnest endeavour to do the will of God, to exemplify the character of Christ in his own conduct, raises to a higher level—to a purer atmosphere—to knowledge of the doctrine (John vii. 17). Then, knowing himself to be God's patient, he will not prescribe to his Physician, feeling that he is God's child, he will not dictate to his Father.

Now, though by our own unaided searching we cannot perfectly find out God, He is knowable—"Deus verius cogitatur quam dicitur; et verius est quam cogitatur" (S. Augustine)—every person in the habit of mathematically reasoning on these subjects is aware that, by help of symbols, defined as unknown principles, we reason, to a certain extent, as correctly as were we actually masters of those principles. For example: A is the universe; P is the principle of order in the universe; N is a competent intelligence, with power of application and illustration, able to deduce any known

definite fact Q as the logical consequence flowing out of the principle P. The theorem can be varied, and P be taken as the principle of order transcending the universe, and so on. The theorem may be tested in this way: P is the principle of order transcending A, the universe; then B is the beauty, C is the consciousness, D is the danger, and so on with any fact; then N is able to deduce this B, or C, or D, as a part of the principle P transcending A, the universe.

Pass to the minuteness and gradations of organisms. Organisms are marvellously complex, some—only the 80,000th or 120,000th of an inch in diameter; others—so small that we measure them in terms of the lengths of luminiferous waves; thus possibilities which seemed romantic enter the region of fact. There are minute beings which, though discoverable by science, are inconceivable by the mind. Take other gradations and intervals—The infinitesimal ripples of a vibrating plate turn sound into electricity, and electricity into sound; there is a continual becoming of things into that which they are not; and as to any dead or lifeless form of continuity, there seems no death—"nec morti esse locum" (Virgil, "Georg." iv. 226)—a voltaic discharge, even when apparently continuous, is a succession of intermediencies at exceedingly short intervals; yet the intervals, compared with actual smaller spaces and times, may be hugely vast. The fact becomes plainly visible when put in larger form—We see in the same day brutes on the summit of a mountain, and men at the foot; animals tapering down by innumerable gradations to the lowest organisms, and thence to inorganic elements. We also find an ascent from lower grades to higher states, until

the noblest animals attain some similitude to that moral condition which constitutes man an immortal being. Take the dog, mark what generosity, what courage he will put on, when sustained by man (Bacon, "Essay on Atheism"). In the poorest parish schools of our land is a noble spectacle of gradational ascent surpassing that by architect, statuary, painter, constructing temples, statues, likenesses: it is that which enables the souls of little children to apprehend and love the living God. This, to him who has insight, is a grander view than the loftiest European cathedral, its spires all resplendent with rays of the rising and setting sun.

The hidden principles at work in these marvels are more or less understood according to the student's proportion of scientific and Scriptural culture. To some men, life—all life, is a divine matter: to others—it grows by chance or fate, and presents no riddle—though they know not Whence, nor Why, nor Whither, it is tending? Pass from individuals to nations—The Greeks were in earnest, and brought forth from their study of natural principle a radiant smiling fleshly grace of Life, embodied by sculptor's chisel in figures of immortal beauty. One class of Oriental mind, specially the Magi, found a principle of semi-sensual grandeur and splendour in Life; and, occasionally, terrible form of glowing fire, sometimes purifying, sometimes consuming, on background of infinite darkness. A better class of Orientalism discerned that the spirit of Life and Nature was something of Heaven. We moderns endeavour to unite science and sacred emotion in one and the same intellect. The process is somewhat as follows. By science we discern that, naturally, the Earth is mother, and the Sun

is father of all living. From the ground, unorganized, proceeded those germs which, quickened by heat and light from heaven, advanced to primal life on earth. This life flowed in two streams: the one a river for all vegetation, the other a stream of animal existence. All primal germs, so far as we know, were and are essentially the same; yet the same are not the same—within the sameness are elements of marvellous diversity. Evolution, so far as verified, traces this varied life from one and the same structureless life-matter—acted upon by powers coming from on high. The growth is always chiefest along lines in the direction of least resistance, or in obedience to impulse of most active vital energy. The progress may be rectilinear, or diagonal, or curved, or circular, or spiral, or in any other form, indeed the sub-kingdoms exhibit every conceivable mode of advance. Another series of facts is occasionally observed in connection with the process of evolution—the accomplishment of great changes, and advance, or retrogression, with least expenditure of time. This accounts for the leaps by which several stages of the ordinary process are not unfrequently jumped over, and explains the absence of intermediary forms. Every process goes forth in secret, from silent and imperceptible operations, toward an end which seems aimed at from the beginning; and every form of life is the accumulation of infinite adaptations.

We now advance to that which is more recondite—the mind. To see and to hear with the spirit those infinitesimal creatures measured by lengths of luminiferous waves, and to comprehend the continual becoming of things into that which they are not, require a sense over

and above the ordinary five—a sixth sense—insight. In like manner, to discern everywhere and in everything the All-knowing, the All-working, in whom all things move and have their being, is to possess that Spirit, νοῦς, called also αἴσθησις, moral sense, which becomes a divine magnetism, drawing a man heavenward, so that he consciously lays hold of eternal life. Then he traces to the Almighty One all that is created, to the Living One all that lives, to the Self-conscious Spirit all that is spiritual, rational, personal, in the world.

Thus to think, is not that bringing together of the true and the false out of which men manufacture the plausible. The most cautious mathematicians admit into their calculations quantities which, by their own showing, are imaginary or impossible; and have to form new algebras which possess no counterpart in reality, yet are means of arrival not only at possibles but actuals. Clear-headed men are engaged in problems like the following:—Measure a line in one direction, or in the opposite; reckon time forward or backward; perform an operation, or reverse it; do it, or undo it. If, having once reversed one of these processes, we reverse it a second time, we shall find that we come back to the original direction of measurement, or of reckoning, or of original operation. Suppose now that, at some stage of a calculation, our formula indicates an alteration such that, if the alteration be repeated, a condition of things not the same as, but the reverse of, the original will be produced; or suppose that time is to be reckoned some way different from future and past, but still in a way having some definite algebraical connection with time that is gone and with time to come. It is clear that

actual experience affords no process to which such measurements of space and time respond: nevertheless, we attain abstract definite points of issue concerning space and infinitude, time and eternity; and ought to give a rational account of the puzzle. The difficulty is partially removed if we say, "The formulæ are more comprehensive than their assigned signification; but, on a more enlarged basis, the formulæ may be capable of interpretation. The difficulties, indeed, indicate that there must be some more comprehensive statement of the problem including cases impossible in the more limited, things unknowable in the known, and an approach to the incomprehensible Godhead by human reason."

These imaginaries, called up by legitimate processes of science, conduct to other practical conclusions. Take, for example, Professor James Thompson's machine, which, invented by his imaginative faculty, he makes, by friction of a disc, a cylinder, and a ball, to effect a variety of complicate calculations, and an unskilled hand to do the work of ten arithmeticians. No machinery, however, can effect the work of a living organism, which instantaneously converts dead matter into living substance, giving it a nucleus, and within that a nucleolus. From these little wells, or founts of life—which may exist and work, strange to say, without cell-wall or centre, in less than every portion of the five-hundredth part of an inch in our body—proceed the threads of nerves, of arteries, of muscle, of bone, and all the mechanism of our system. The same causes not producing the same results, the difference in results being indeed measureless; yet, the bioplasm always the

same, so far as we know, in every tissue. Not only does the mystic play weave fibre round fibre spirally, the whole complexity of tissue is woven together into a conscious responsible being, able to know God, to glorify God, and enjoy Him. The result of the process wrought by hidden things, is well stated by Berkeley ("Second Dialogue,")—"What delicacy, what contrivance, what beauty in animal and vegetable bodies! How exquisitely are all things suited as well to their particular ends, as to constitute opposite parts of the whole! and while they mutually aid and support, do they not also set off and illustrate each other?"

Our process of thought reveals hidden principles which science cannot explain, proves that the definiteness of mathematics becomes fictitious if all its conclusions are pressed as necessarily and essentially containing the whole of nature. Beyond the range of subject-matters, not perfectly uniform, strict use of the science will hinder—not help thought. Neither chemistry nor mathematics explains life, they do but reveal mysteries which pass all understanding. The mechanical system may possibly be a sort of ballast to our aspirations concerning purity, spiritual life, and Divine Life, but must not be allowed to weaken those receptive, perceptive, and constructive faculties of consciousness by means of which we discern objective reality in things that are incapable of physical embodiment. We, so to speak, change our magnet, and pass through various bodily mental and emotional states in ourselves; then, experimenting, transform water to gases, and gases to water; unfold and refold the textures of organisms in our study of life. Beyond this we are unable to

go; once loose the living strands of existence, and no human skill is able to join them again—we cannot create life.

> "Once put out thine,
> Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
> I know not where is that Promethean heat
> That can thy light relume. When I have plucked thy rose
> I cannot give it vital breath again
> It needs must wither."
>
> *Othello*, Act v. sc. 2.

Hidden powers weave the lion and the swallow, plant and man. Marvellously intricate processes go forward in apparently structureless matter. Things are done for which neither means nor causes are seen in operation. Matter and its forces come from the unseen, are a birth from the invisible. There are influences which we cannot fathom, nor mete, but their inscrutable operations, obtain an important place among the facts of existence. The same means and instruments are not always used to effect the same ends. The means are changed, the tools are broken, littles come from the great and great from the small, many from the few or few from the many, nor can we tell why or how. Observe the rain: it falls on mountain slopes, collects in rills, combines in streams and rivers, hides underground, bubbles in fountains; and now—leaping in music—cuts new channels; and, finding a way to the desert, gladdens the barren ground with fruitful beauty. The blessing is distilled out of invisible watery particles which ascended from the earth to render heaven beneficent. There is a secret affinity between the lightning of heaven and the conductor which brings it down to the earth, between the steel and the magnet, why not between man

and God? Our spirit indeed lays hold of the Divine Will, and draws out a blessing by being itself drawn to God. A hidden work—but we feel and know it well. It changes earthly thoughts into heavenly ideas, turns flesh into spirit, carries our prayers to Heaven, and brings down angels to bless our heart and home.

THOUGHT VI.

ARE MIRACLES IMPROBABLE?

"Carve out
Free space for every human doubt,
That the whole mind may orb about."
The Two Voices.

"Omnia se simulant scire."
PLAUTUS, *Trinummus*, Act i. sc. 2.

"Science is their forte, omniscience their foible."—SYDNEY SMITH.

MIRACLES are asserted to be so improbable, that "no amount of testimony suffices to make a scientific thinker entertain, for a moment, any idea of their reality."

The assertion must be met with plain speaking—To refuse all testimony, seeing that, as to ancient miracles, evidence is the chief proof; and that, to most people, testimony is the only proof they can have as well concerning science and philosophy as theology; stamps such pretentious scientific thinkers as wholly unreasonable. We, theologians, contend that the kind of scientific inference, called historical, compels belief that at certain epochs there has been an intervention by supernatural causes. Hence, science itself enforces us to accept, as matters of fact, the accounts of miracles which are supported by historic proof. Scientific thinkers,

the greatest and furthest sighted of men, the most experienced and prudent persons in the world, whether of past or present time, have received and do receive miracles, as one of the modes in which God reveals Himself to men.

The miracles of Holy Scripture are not connected with silly credulous prattle, but associated with imperishable words and facts; are not united to low ignorant superstition, but to highest morality, and to those exalted views of life which honour and bless human existence. "They are not feigned by trifling understandings, who think to serve God with a well-meant lie; nor promoted by the credulity of such persons in whose hearts easiness, folly, and credulity are bound up" (Jerem. Taylor, "Life of Christ," Part II. sec. 10). They are parts of the faith and life and doings of men whose sagacity and experience placed them above deception; whose purity and greatness rendered them incapable of deceit. Miracles—as revealing and confirming truths which could only be miraculously known; as acts—linked with words of knowledge that instruct and win dominion over profoundest minds; as doings, received by purest hearts—approved by strongest intellects—producing the most sacred and useful lives—have that testimony which appears to reason irresistible. With the truth of miracles Christianity stands or falls. It began with a miracle, its progress depends upon miracles, its consummation will be by miracles.

Rothe ("Studien und Kritiken") says, "Miracles are not adjuncts appended from without to a revelation in itself independent of them, but constitutive elements of the revelation itself." Van Mildert ("Boyle Lectures,"

Serm. xxi.) states, "The possibility of miracles cannot be denied without denying the very nature of God as an all-powerful Being; their probability cannot be questioned without questioning His moral perfections; and their certainty, as matters of fact, can only be invalidated by destroying the very foundations of human testimony." Hey ("Lectures on Divinity") wrote, "If we suppose such a case as the publication of a new religion like the Christian, there is more to be presumed in favour of miracles than against them." Christlieb ("Christian Belief") argues, "He who believes in a living God must logically believe in miracles: for God is the miracle of miracles. . . . There can be nothing more illogical than to admit, as rationalism does, the miracle of creation, and at the same time to deny the possibility of other miracles. What God has done once He must always be able to do, otherwise He would cease to be God." Mansel ("Essay on Miracles") thinks, "If the spiritual restoration of mankind has in any degree been promoted by means of a religion professing to have been introduced by the aid of miracles, and whose whole truth is involved in the truth of that profession, we have a sufficient reason for the miraculous interposition, superior to any that can be urged for or against it from considerations of the material world."

Indeed, all testimony must be repudiated, if this evidence is refused; the wisest men charged with folly, if believers are to be accounted silly; the most stupendous and sacred acts in the world are rendered contemptible, if these be deemed a lie; all religion is declared false, if Christianity be accounted untrue; all our faith, all our hope, all our future, our knowledge of God, of

Judgment to come, of responsibility to Deity, must be scattered to the winds, if miracles are unworthy of credit. All sacred life, doctrine, ritual, literature, society, is based on the reality of miracles. What becomes of our faith if there was no Day of Pentecost, of Ascension, of Resurrection, no Incarnation, no command from God? We know that men, for the most part, speak truth; there is more truth than lying in the world. No art, no science, no history—not even the fictitious, is utterly false; everything, no matter what, has some basis in the real. Is it probable that every statement as to miracle, all consciousness and experience of divine aid, that all religions—without exception professedly built on the supernatural, are wholly false? Is it indeed credible that this one thing, miracle, professedly done for God and truth by men who are acknowledged examples of truth and virtue, should be the one and only thing in the world that is utterly a lie? Thus viewed, miracles, far from being improbable, are highly probable.

We do well to inquire concerning the asserted improbability.

It is a physical improbability, a departure from the usual course of things, a deviation from common law, as our Lord's walking on the sea, and His raising of Lazarus. The common experience of men is that the dead do not live again, and that he who takes a watery path will sink like S. Peter. The improbability of a miracle is that of an effect in nature which, at present, can only be accounted for as the result of an original or direct movement from the Divine Centre, which the known laws of nature do not permit, and which science cannot explain.

Are direct movements from the Divine Centre, or are beginnings of something new, so improbable as to render faith in their occurrence impossible? Certainly not; for in that case there could not have been a creation. Is the course of natural law, since the beginning, so fixed and all-embracing that it could not be, and never has been other than it is? No, for science testifies that the duration of nature is temporary: there was a passage from some former state into the present, and the present will enter a new succession; and as we know that the past transition was not effected by laws now at work, the future progress may be also novel. Are we to jump at all the unknown and say, "It is the double of that with which we are acquainted"? Every discovery would disprove the assertion. Will materialists fully explain, by the present laws of nature, any one act, any one event, any one existence in its origin, in its continuance, in its end? They cannot. Everything we know, whether in nature or history, inorganic or organic, passes beyond common law and experience. The difference between a miracle which deviates from the ordinary course of nature, and an event in accordance with that course, is that the miracle brings us quickly face to face with the unknown, and the common event passes through various observed antecedents. Whatever exists—whether by many, few, or no media—is a result of action from the great Centre, is a miracle. "Deus medius esse dicitur, æqualiter omnibus consulens" (S. Augustine).

Not only the origin of things, their continuance soon passes beyond the limits of our knowledge. Every stage in the process of advance, of evolution, is a mys-

tery, every step in departure is a marvel. There is no transition from the inorganic to the organic, no passage from being to not being, that science formulates into real cognition. Every epoch in the history of the world realizing a new and essentially higher form of existence, of power, of beauty, of freedom, is—in origin and continuance—a departure from previous law, a miracle; for how can fixed and uniform law allow a departure at one time and not at another? Dr. Schenkel well said, "Few men are wise enough to perceive that much more intellect is necessary to the believing of a miracle than cleverness for denial."

We somewhat change the form of our thought.

Nature is an example of continual advances, advances previously unimaginable. Man is a miracle compared with the beast, the beast is a miracle compared with the plant, the plant is a miracle compared with the stone. First came energies (we do not now concern ourselves with the origin of matter) regulating inorganic matter—then vegetation, afterwards animal life, culminating in the human. Could a mineral account for the laws of vegetable growth by a new kind of accretion? Would a vegetable, in one of its sports, devise a power of animal life? and a mammal aspire to manhood and attain it?

Indeed, there is no escape from the miraculous; and why should we refuse those miracles which are only deviations from a course which was itself originated by deviation? Those who believe that all advance was so gradual, even imperceptible, that there never was any real advance, nor any miracle, the whole being an easy onward flow, accept a really inconceivable and impos-

sible miracle: a cause not causative, an advance without essential beginning, without actual stages of progress, and without real distinctive end. They, no doubt, can construct a plane to ascend so gradually and exquisitely that water may be coaxed to run up hill. Other people will wisely maintain that miracles, even regarded as innovations upon the ordinary course of nature, are not improbable: for as the basis of existing things rests on something wholly different—the known forces, laws, and course of nature not accounting for their own existence, nor being explicable by science—nature is one splendid miracle.

A sceptic may object—that if we define miracle in one way, even Hume will admit; if in another way, to cover special and lawless operations, many will deny it. We answer—our process of thought proves that every, even the smallest natural event and thing is, in its essence, a miracle and unexplainable; it seems therefore the height of folly to refuse other events and things because they excel our power of explanation. This, however, will be dealt with in another place.

Take a further thought:—

Within a definite time, say ten or twelve millions of years ago, our earth was uninhabitable. Then our sacred men—Moses and Isaiah, our literary men—Homer and Shakespeare, our scientific men—Newton and Pascal, were not. Think of the upward progress to them through myriads of centuries; then carry thought to the future, in part calculable, when the habitable globe, by its extinction, shall destroy humanity; when Dantes and Miltons, Patriarchs and Saints, the great and small, if wholly of the earth, shall be thrust again into darkness

and death. Is it probable that we are thus played with by Chance, or that evil Fate destroys us, as a wicked child plays with a drowning animal?

> "Usque adeo res humanos vis abdita quœdam
> Proculcare, ac ludibrio sibi habere videtur?"
>
> LUCRET., v. 1232.

Is the Intelligence without any Heart of Reason, or the upward progress without Direction? If so, what is all our science worth? If we are at the end, and not in the first part of our play, what avail the good longing for more good, more truth, more life? Thou beseechest God for the recovery of a child at the point of death—useless trouble! Thou weepest at the coffin of a father, a mother, and dost trust the bands of love are not sundered for ever—delusion and folly! There is no resurrection. Thou prayest for divine help to overcome evil, and to attain purity—absurd! Thou art subject to a deep, fixed, fated process of nature. Shall we accept this despairing creed—irrational as hopeless? Nay. Physical science shall perform her part in the world's development—perform it humbly; remembering that her province is but an infinitesimal portion of the vast sphere of knowledge, and that she can but touch the hem of the garment of Majesty. Our body with its sensations, our mind with its science, our spirit with its sacred emotions, are keys that open the doors of many chambers of mysteries—

> ". . . unlock the gates of joy;
> Of horror that and thrilling fears,
> Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

It is folly to talk of miracles being improbable. We know that there are miracles in a tree, a stone, a withered

leaf, in the broad ocean and azure heaven; but more specially in those blessed minds who consciously hold communion with the Eternal—

> "Such minds are truly from the Deity,
> For they are Powers; and hence the highest bliss
> That men can know is theirs; the consciousness
> Of whom they are, habitually infused
> Through every image and through every thought."

THOUGHT VII.

IS BELIEF IN MIRACLES UNREASONABLE?

"Ex atrâ veniunt clarissima fulgura nube,
Aurum de rutilo clarius igne micat.
Sidera tum produnt, cum nox calique terras
Induit."

"A number of propositions, long held to be inconceivable, have now passed into science as uncontested truths."

"ANTIQUITY is the home of the Supernatural, but modern criticism reduces the Supernatural to the natural." Those who so speak favour us with instruction how "to retain the Bible, and give up the Supernatural." They say, "The perplexing signs concerning Gideon and the fleece—perplexing and incredible if taken literally—are made very easy if we eliminate the miraculous, and regard them as later versions of some early metaphorical expressions recording how, when all other men of Israel were imbued with terror, the hero Gideon was full of valour; and when Israel was heated with over-confidence, Gideon alone retained coolness of judgment."

There will be no occasion thus to separate God from nature, and the marvellous from our Faith, if we can show that belief in the miracles of the Bible is reasonable.

Locke, a good reasoner, said, "Miracles well attested do not only find credit themselves, but give it also to other truths which need such confirmation"—the truths taught by Moses, by the prophets, by Jesus Christ, needed such confirmation; and it was given. "Multi sunt, quos ad invisibilium fidem visibilibus miraculis opus est excitari" (S. Augustine).

Locke is contradicted by Spinoza, who asserts that miracles cannot make known the existence of God; but Spinoza regarded miracles simply as anomalies, beginning and ending with themselves; and overlooked or refused the fact that they instrumentally denote and signify Divine Will.

Neander says truly, "The miracle, by displaying phenomena out of the ordinary connection of cause and effect, manifests the appearance of a higher power, and points out a higher connection, in which even the chain of phenomena in the visible world must be taken up."

Miracles ought to be regarded sacramentally: outward and visible signs of the Almighty's invisible presence, meant to assure us of the Divinity of the holy truths which are taught by Inspired men. Mansel ("Essay on Miracles") says, "The assertion that the Gospel miracles are objects of faith is undoubtedly true; but it is true in a sense which is by no means incompatible with their being also evidences."

The miracles of Scripture being in connection with spiritual truths—themselves great and marvellous as the miracles, mutually illustrate and confirm one another. Christianity is not so much a definite quantity of moral teaching, as a series of facts,—essentially miraculous, and Christ is the central miracle. His person—the incar-

nation of God in man, His work—the redemption of the world, His resurrection and ascension—by superhuman power, unite spiritual truth with substantial reality, of which devout men assert they have some experience. The truths are, in part, as much above the capacity of unaided intellect to acquire sure knowledge of, as the miracles are, in part, above the ordinary powers of nature to accomplish. In the confirmation and elucidation of the partly known which each affords to the other, credibility is given to the unknown spiritual truth, and material foundation to the unwonted marvellous fact. We may say, Two worlds are knit into one. We might doubt for ever concerning the likeness of man to God, the Forgiveness of Sin, the general Resurrection; if we had not the intelligible miracles of Christ's Incarnation, Atonement, and Rising from the Dead, affording sign-material and sign-manual to those very things. The known, whether mental or material, graduates to the unknown; and the natural to the Supernatural. It seems rational that men, carried to high summits of sacred truth, should be enabled to verify and to certify, by means of physical evidence, that they had not been borne away from reality by flights of fancy. It is not unreasonable, nor incredible, that men, who are proved by the mark they have made in the world to be the greatest of mankind, should be enabled to do works the reality of which is evidenced by an established Christianity.

Those who beheld and those who wrought miracles had experimental proof of the reality. How can we, who have not experimental verification, obtain surety of knowledge? By examining the testimony of those who

were eye-witnesses; who had will, capacity, and opportunity for disproof. If such testimony be disallowed, nothing can be proved or believed which is beyond our own personal experience or observation. We ourselves know that miracles are not the offspring of one age, nor done in one place, nor by one generation of men; but possess the concurrent testimony derived from many men, of various places, of divers times. They are the links in a scheme which embraces all ages. They are the sign and proof of a marvellous series of truths which have won acceptance from the greatest, wisest, best of mankind. It is not inconsistent, but reasonable to believe the testimony of honest, intelligent, competent men, who have neither pleasure nor profit in deceiving, who saw the marvels, sometimes wrought them, sometimes were the subjects of them. The testimony in favour of miracles is stronger than that of any other historical event, and not less strong than that in science or philosophy for generally received theories. Miracles cannot be verified by experiment, because their essential feature is the superhuman element; and some of the most generally received physical facts are incapable of experimental demonstration; indeed, the whole world is compelled to receive most of its knowledge by means of less reliable testimony than that which supports miracles.

"Hume's argument against miracles, depends upon the strength of analogy and the weakness of testimony; but he does not rightly oppose these—one to the other, and analogy is weaker in itself, and testimony is stronger in itself, than he allows; and any analogy is liable to be interrupted by other analogies, or to be weakened or destroyed by change of circumstances; and extraordinary

cases are always likely to be attended with extraordinary measures; and the regularity of the movements and operations of nature may answer all its purposes, though something supernatural be performed on the first publication of such a religion as the Christian" (Hey, "Lectures on Divinity," I. xv. 13). "The incongruity, the anomaly, would be if they were not there; if the salvation of the souls of men were to be brought about by no higher means than those which minister to their bodily appetites and material comforts" (Mansel, "Essay on Miracles").

Miracles and natural processes are somewhat akin. It seems reasonable to think that were our powers so enlarged that we looked into the essence of things, and discerned their real causes, we should find that miracles are the rule, not the exception. Miracles on earth may be nature in heaven; but we have not that sight, we walk by faith. Evidence, of whatever kind, is never so overwhelmingly convincing as to destroy the power of our will freely to determine. When our will is Godward, miracles are not regarded as prodigies of the kingdom of Nature, but fitting splendours for the kingdom of Grace; not wrought for sake of the physical universe, but for the moral beings within. When science is ennobled by faith: then faith means eyesight and insight. The divorce of æthereal from sublunary things is disallowed: marvels are seen to be reciprocal, and to exist in both. The rainbow, formed in the sky out of a dripping cloud, is made here below with a jet of water; so in reasonable use of mental power, we ascend, by increasing heights of conception, until we attain a spiritual view of God; and, by strenuous faithful effort to realize

His holiness in our life, we form an approximately true image of Him in our soul. As lower processes of thought and imagery conduct poetic genius to high flights of which other men are incapable;

> "The poet's eye, in fine frenzy rolling,
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;"
> SHAKESPEARE.

so can sacred genius be elevated to the seer's transcendental vision: natural processes are akin to the Supernatural. It is more reasonable to believe (even taking the materialist view—"Nature governs everything") that the intellectual and moral character of early men was impressed and developed by means of supernatural training; than that they possessed, intuitively, without any training, that high understanding of Spiritual and Divine Mysteries which later men have not been able to attain.

We are naturally and reasonably led to spiritual and divine mysteries by the linking and blending of external things with our own inner action: as the Magi to the Messiah by a star; as Peter, a fisherman, by fish. We think of human love in its purity, of fatherhood in highest excellency, and thence arise to conceptions of the Divine Nature. Men who feel that they ought to love God, yet do not love Him, should think of Him as the perfection or concentration of all that is most noble, lovely, admirable. It is easy to work for such a Being and with such a Being. He sheds light down into the murkiest depths of our existence; and He gives, and we use outward acts to conduct us, as by a sign, to the inner and spiritual. Preserved in battle when all around are slain, rescued from a storm in which all our comrades

perished, we are devoutly conscious of a Providence. Take this experience :—We walk along the cliff of some rock-bound coast; and, as we look down at the waves breaking far below, the sunny play and our own health and strength place human aspirations in harmony with beautiful nature. Then, as we think that one false step would cast us where not all the skill of men could save, a feeling grows that we are under the care of Him who rules the world. Months or years afterwards, when asleep, or walking through crowded streets, our imagination pictures the rock-bound coast, sea beneath with musical rhythm in the breakers, and memory cries—"There is more than preservation in all this: thou art a very child of God." No adequate scientific explanation —many have been attempted—can be given as to the origin of such thoughts in ancient days, and their continuance in modern times, unless it takes outward realities as a material platform by means of which our inner nature seeks, finds, and rejoices in the Source of both. The more accurate our thought the deeper is our conviction that if we accept cheerfully and manfully our work, we are blessedly connected with the mystery of things unseen. The road towards true faith, and reverence for God's kingdom, is not to peak and pine, but to go right on about our business as the birds and flowers do. Cowards, old Odin held, go to the very bottom of Hela-pool, and by no other means than of becoming brave at last do they rise out of that everlasting bog. Men who whine, as if the world were not good enough for them, and those who sink lower and lower in unfathomable slime, will surely go whither they ought—the fittest place for them; indeed, it would be a very

bad thing for them to go where they ought not. Our being here, when rightly understood, affords the strongest possible reason for assumption that we shall ere long, be somewhere else. To the able man this world is not dumb, and plainly shows that nature is working upward and developing higher forms. Woe to him who is unnatural, looks not up, takes not heart! The truly genuine men

> "Bate not a jot of heart or hope,
> But steer right onward."

It is utter unreason to say that belief in miracles is unreasonable: the blending of common things without us with the thoughts within us, reveals a whole world of miracle.

It seems reasonable, and part of natural fitness and harmony, that external things should co-operate with our internal action; so that by advice of each we acquire the Reason or Cause of both. Now this operation, the blending of the inner and outer, while a perfectly natural linking, is not less transcendental and inexplicable in its reality, than the linking, of which we are equally conscious, that gives real and high cognition of the Supernatural or Universal. Lord Bacon partly expressed the thought, "God hath framed the mind of man as a glass capable of the universal world (joying to receive the signature thereof) as the eye is of light." A really great man loves at first sight, and would gladly reproduce, whatever is tender and true. Good words awake in us a sense both of the morally and physically beautiful. Whatever is chivalrous and high-minded seems to assure our hearts that both for the bodies and souls of men forms of life, far nobler and fairer than any now

possessed, will come. The divine drudgery of doing good in dens of darkness and sloughs of filth prophecy of that—

> " One far-off Divine event,
> Toward which the whole creation moves."

The world is not mere show and seeming, though it teems with perplexities, as to the unconscious activity of reason in nature. Every puzzle is a beneficent parable for our intellect. There was at least something of truth in the thought of St. Francis of Assisi, that the whole of nature is a choir of God's angelic ministers.* Any way it gives a touch of genius, so that even apparently dry scientific mechanical processes have life in them. Every one of the ends subserved by mechanical, chemical, vital processes, conditions some other; becomes, in turn, further means; until we rise from brute force and cunning to manly strength and intelligence—to love, morality, worship. Music suggests other and higher harmonies than those of sound.† Seed-time and harvest tell, even though we refuse to listen, of other sowing, other reaping. The host of heaven speaks in terrible accents to some; yet to most the heavenly vision is of Beings

* Thought of S. Francis of Assisi. S. Francis, "Cantico de la Creature, Comunemente detto de lo Frate Sole:" "Lauderis, Domine, Deus meos, propter omnes creaturas tuas et specialiter propter honorabilem fratrem nostrum Solem . . . propter sororem Suam . . . propter fratrem Ventum . . . propter sororem nostram Mortem," etc. "Patris Francisci Vita," a St. Bonaventura, ch. viii. sec. 5: "Creaturas quantumlibet parvas fratris vel sororis appellabat nominibus pro eo, quod eos secum unum habere sciebat principium. Illos tamen viscerosius amplexabatur et dulcius, quæ Christi mansuetudinem piam similitudine prætendunt, et Scripturæ sacrosanctæ significationem figurant."

† S. Augustine: "Musica ad indicandam divinæ gubernationis harmoniam hominibus concessa est."

good and kind.* Many men ceasing to think where reflection properly begins, and failing to recognize in nature that unconscious activity of reason out of which our intelligence has sprung, never attain the real height of argument. No working is by blind force:† nature, viewed in inmost and uttermost significance, is a system thoroughly worked out; and the gleams of inward and outward splendour focus in our self-consciousness. No thoughtful man takes a pig-sty view; we all prefer that of the artist, well-nigh absorbed in beauty, who, not losing unity and self-control, finds an exceeding broad commandment. We love the poet—passionate, sensuous too—who delights in fragrance and beauty more æthereal than the scent and colour of the lily. The amplitude of sky, the faces of children, those breathings and sweet sacred influences which are like the breath of angels, have more reason in their nature, and more history in their work, than the unpoetic think.

"'Twas a lovely thought to mark the hours,
As they floated in light away,
By the opening and the folding flowers,
That laugh on the summer's day.
Yet is not life, in its real flight,
Mark'd thus—even thus—on earth,
By the closing of one hope's delight,
And another's gentle birth?

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* Lucan, i. 65: "Quæ caput a cœlo regionibus ostendebat Horribili Super aspectu mortalibus instans." On the other hand, S. Francis of Assisi: "Laudent eum gloriosum cœli et terra; et superexaltent et laudent eum in sœcula. Tu, Dominus Deus, es magna dulcedo nostra, tu es bonitas," etc.

† Sir E. Beckett, "Origin of Natural Laws," p. 8: "The idea of chance is mathematically inconsistent with any uniform laws of nature."

Oh ! let us live so that flower by flower,
Shutting in turn, may leave
A lingering still for the sunset hour,
A charm for the shaded eve."

MRS. HEMANS.

Those who deny the existence of anything in ourselves and in nature which exceeds both, who think that the world is without spirit, endeavour to explain the sense of mystery, the longing for true holiness, the persuasion of a future life, as vague influences and aspirations which possess no reality. If these men are right we do wrong in following the steps of the noblest and purest of our race. The strength that filled the saints and martyrs of the Church, the Divinity that breathed in the life of Christ, was a false strength derived from delusion, a misconception as to the essence of things. Will any man of common sense present the theory that the Holiness which arises in us as we endeavour to be like God, that the Faith which grows in us as we become more intimate with Christ, that the Hope which cheers us more and more as we are persuaded of the Life to Come, are mere hallucinations ? We are sure that hunger after an ideal moral excellence is not a shadow out of dreamland. The poet says—

"Tell me not in mournful numbers
Life is but an empty dream."

LONGFELLOW.

To many it is the great reality, the life of life. Those who live in doubts, self-reproaches, struggles, prayers, if they have that one thought—"the finest thing in the world is to be truly good and to make others good"—will soon know of a divine and wonderful order, linking

earth to heaven; be conscious of a perfect polity in which they, as children of God, will be arrayed around the throne of Him who died for men.

Do we not reasonably maintain that there is something to be learned outside the laboratory and dissecting-room, that there are other alphabets and grammars than those of physical science? If so, as nothing can exceed its own nature—whether material, intellectual, or emotional; as no man can put himself on the top shelf by tugging at his own waistband; that which enables us to look beyond nature to the Supernatural, from matter to Spirit, from mortality to Immortality, must be a something within ourselves and in nature which excels both. This thought represents a fact—credible, reasonable, probable—it is a miracle; and the miracle is one of the most beautiful and natural things in the world. Take Shakespeare's words and give them highest fulfilment, as to meaning, by application to Jesus Christ, and to ourselves—

> "The idea of His Life shall sweetly creep
> Into our study of imagination,
> And every lovely organ of His Life
> Shall come apparelled in more precious habit,
> More moving-delicate, and full of life,
> Into the eye and prospect of our souls
> Than when He lived indeed."

In connection with the fact that by Sacred Experimental Studies on the Life of Christ—we erect a spiritual statue of the Supreme in our heart, take a great physical truth. The whole multitude of human beings who have lived on earth since the origin of mankind, are, if the doctrine of heredity be true, partially existing in this person and in that person at the present time: in

the sagacious statesman, the sublime philosopher, the poetic genius, the heroic soldier. Every particle of the ancient substance becomes new in other forms, and past experience moulds every present human being ere he be refashioned. The thought is good, the fact wonderful, though pantheists abuse it. We behold a marvellous simultaneous existence in the world. It is perfectly natural, but who, without a miracle, can trace the line that separates our personality, individuality, identity, from other existences? and do it in conformity with the verity, that not one of us is self-made, but every one is as a microscopic atom in a wonderful universe which neither in whole nor in part was by self-origination; and of which the invisible, the pre-existent, enter the visible and present; so that all the past possesses a future, and all the present a past?

On the physical truth erect a spiritual reality. The spirit, the thought, the soul, the genius, the mind, the true man, of all that multitude passed not away any more than the bodily substance. In that pugnacious sceptical spirit which is bred, not as twaddlers fancy, by too extended knowledge, but by the sense of ignorance and narrow sphere of thought, the existence of an immortal soul within us is denied; and it is said, "all which is required to cast out Satan is a smattering of the 'ologies.'" What folly! Will men educate themselves for high things, if they know not whither they go? or live as those who possess a great future, if annihilation may befall them to-night? Their own "ologies" should teach them better.

If we track matter to the edge of an incomprehensible truth, no less can be done with regard to intelligence,

that most excellent thing which confers highest value on matter. The system of matter exists in a region of space; that which we call the spirit, dwelling in matter, takes possession of space by means of matter; but the intensity and true life of it cannot be expressed in terms of space. We are in the infancy of thought and language: we can only say—that which we call spirit is not to be defined by locality—as a part of space; but, rather, by inwardness of a different extension—a finite similitude of the Deity. This fact—duly blended with the diversity of nature in locality as to Infinitude, and in time as to Eternity—will serve to take off the edge of unbelief as to immortality of the spirit.

Thus rightly using our reason, by endeavouring to raise it into high exercise, we find that nature borders everywhere on the Supernatural. Instead of belief in miracles being unreasonable, it is that by which we see, it reveals the one rock on which our feet find standing place. The belief seems intuitive, due not so much to inquiry, as to our conception of organic unity, purpose, coherence, in the world; by which the commonest things contain germs of the wonderful. Every moment of our life, every particle of our body, every vibration of our substance, enters the transcendental. Space extends to Infinitude, time has some alliance with Eternity—"Æternitas una dies, et multi dies, et multi anni" (S. Augustine)—the human spirit is conscious of the Divine Spirit. Reason has shown its strength, become its own critic, found design and process in nature—beautiful and subtle, powerful and grand. Design on a grander scale than that of an artificer constructing a machine; process more wonderful than the growth of a universal tree;

conducting worlds in new paths, replenishing them with new operations—ever advancing with indications of greater future knowledge for the intelligent, and promises to the pure in heart of wider rule in manifold dominions of the Almighty.

It is certain, so every kind of science seems to testify, that we are being educated, that intelligence is enlarging; the process is by involution and evolution. Let us rejoice in the light and power of it, and make good men out of bad ones: they will be our credentials as to the power of the world to come. Nor is science, nor are these the only testimonies: our seemingly fantastic and incoherent miseries, storm after earthquake, and after earthquake fire, conduct all of us, at least once in our lives, to a pit of utter darkness—that we may cry to God for light. Some of us can only so be made better.

THOUGHT VIII.

ARE MIRACLES UNNATURAL?

"Dei Voluntas rerum natura est."—S. AUGUSTINE.

"Laws are rules generally followed, and therefore, when anything inanimate takes repeatedly the same course, we conceive it as following a rule, or, as it cannot govern itself, obeying a law; but its being subject to any rule or law is really the dictate of our imagination: we make a kind of person of it, and, in some indistinct way, fancy it a person under government, rule, order."—HEY'S *Lectures on Divinity*, i. xv. 4.

THOUGHT has made it clear—that nature derives its origin and continuance from the Supernatural. It is certain that things were not always as they now are. The universe is a sphere for phases of progress. So soon as beings and existences are unsuitable for one stage they pass to another, according to their various capacities of advance. To admit this, however, brings in the miraculous; and, though by our process of reasoning, miracles assume an air of probability and reasonableness, they are nevertheless asserted to be somewhat unnatural —contrary to what, strangely enough, is called "the fixed course of things;" and may, therefore, be refused.

The refusal is unwise. The miraculous is not more supernatural than is nature itself. The creation of nature was not a necessity, but a free act on God's part,

it is the miracle of miracles—rendering every other miracle possible and natural. As to a fixed order of things, it is only a fixity compatible with ceaseless progress: an all-pervading elasticity and variety are remarkable and prevalent. The worlds, so far as we know them, never occupy for any two consecutive moments the same position in space; nor is any atom in our solar system acted upon in exactly the same direction, or with the same degree of force, for any two succeeding instants. The phenomena which accompany any particular event, will never, all of them, accompany it again, nor will the universe ever again return to exactly the same state in which it was at any previous moment. The same things even are not always done in the same way; and if miracles are a sort of by-path in connection with the common highway, a speciality, or kind of relief to uniformity and denial of fatality, they become instructive lessons in theology concerning natural variety. The point of contact with divine energy seems near and direct in the miracle, more distant and by manifold media in the natural, but it is only the mode of manifestation that varies, the energy in both cases is nigh at hand.

The thought may be varied and enlarged:—

When we regard external objects, and consider the operation of forces, we are never able to discover any essential power or quality which binds the antecedent to the event, cause to effect, rendering the one an infallible sequence of the other: the energy moving nature and its work are both inscrutable. This admission, by science and philosophy, that the causes of things are inscrutable, is an admission that natural things are not really more

explainable than the so-called miracles. At the first appearance of an object we cannot guess at the effect which will result, and that effect, whatever it be, is in no wise, so far as science can ascertain, a necessary or certain sequence; not until after many repetitions of apparently the same effect from apparently the same cause, do we say the recurrence is by a law—nature's customary way. Solidity, extension, motion, are known only by experience; and these qualities are so complete in themselves that we can never, beforehand, point out any other event that necessarily results from them. We cannot even be sure, in fact we know the contrary, that the same infinite multitude of phenomena, which accompany the production of any event, will, all and every, continue to accompany it in the future: so that it is impossible, either for science or philosophy, to prove that nature is uniform; or, if uniform, will continue to operate in the manner we suppose ourselves to have discovered that it now acts. The scenes of nature are continually shifting, one object follows another; but the energy actuating the whole is hidden—never prophecies of itself in any of the qualities of matter. Heat attends flame, but we do not know why, or the nature of their connection. Every natural event is inexplicable—both as to its cause and sequence—and would, apart from oft recurrence, be counted a miracle. Great or startling exceptions are not really unnatural, or contrary to nature, but exceptions akin to those which introduced first causes and first effects.

Unthinking people imagine that the fall of heavy bodies, the growth of plants, the nourishment of animals, are by the very energy that seems connected with the

effect; and when custom has allied the antecedent to the consequent, the belief arises, and then the strong assurance, that the two are and must always be joined together: but there is no visible tie, no necessary idea of transmitted power, or of union between any two ideas of the mind, or between any two operations of bodies, other than that arising from their ordinary connection or transition. Those who speak of miracles being contrary to nature, would have us think that they have been on the other side of nature and know all about it: but all that they can say is, "Miracles do not fall in with that usual order and sequence in nature with which we are personally acquainted." Granted that miracles are an innovation upon the ordinary course of nature, an innovation which is not merely apparent but real, what then? Why nature, itself, as a whole and in every of its parts, was and is an innovation on that which preceded, and does its work by being an innovation; the previous state on which it innovated being the ground which throws it out into relief. In like manner, miracles do their work by being innovations.

We will now, as by experiment, verify the reasoning.

Lucretius, with somewhat of oracular solemnity, predicted—and modern physicists, because of remarkable facts and analogies in nature, assert—the dissolution of all things; though the Roman poet supposed the eternity of his own atoms.

> "Materies igitur, solido quæ corpore constat,
> Esse æterna potest, cum cætera dissolvantur."
>
> LUCRETIUS, i. 519.

"Suppose all authors in all languages agree that from the 1st of January, 1600, there was a total darkness

over the whole earth for eight days: suppose that the tradition of this extraordinary event is still strong and lively among the people: that all travellers who return from foreign countries bring us accounts of the same tradition, without the least variation or contradiction: it is evident that our present philosophers, instead of doubting the fact, ought to receive it as certain, and ought to search for the causes whence it might be derived. The decay, corruption, and dissolution of nature are an event rendered probable by so many analogies that any phenomenon which seems to have a tendency towards that catastrophe comes within the reach of human testimony" (Hume's "Essay on Miracles"). From the above we learn that the end of the world is a matter of likelihood. If it come at all, it may come in a moment—at any moment: up to that moment the argument of experience as to the course of nature will continue in full force, but in a moment it will be exploded. The argument derived from experience as to the necessary continuance of things in their present form and order of existence utterly fails. There is no reason why a new event should be in the course, or like the hitherto manner, of nature: therefore, unlikeness is not unreasonable—is not unnatural. "So far the conception of miracles belongs to the critique of our knowledge. We call that a miracle for which we can find no analogy whatever in that which has previously existed, *i.e.* in the established system of our empirical knowledge" (Christlieb, "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief").

What is meant by the order of nature? That present succession and recurrence of physical events of

which we have some experience. This leaves out that of which we have no experience; and the assumption that nature in the past was, and that nature in the future will be, like that of which we have partial knowledge, is based on an unwarrantable expectation of likeness. Experience can give direct and certain information of those precise objects only, and of that precise time, which fall under its cognizance; but what connection has it with past and future time, and with other objects? The inference of connection is not linked by reason to the fact—it is a mere supposition. If any one assert—"all experience is against miracles," he simply begs the question, and deserves punishment as a sturdy beggar. If he assert—"general experience is against miracles," that is merely the platitude, miracles are uncommon; for really, this assumed broad basis rests on the exceedingly narrow one of individual experience. This individual experience is not a reliable guide. Hume ("Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding," Sect. IV.) says, "Let the course of things be allowed hitherto ever so regular, that alone, without some new argument or inference, proves not for the future that it will continue so. As an agent, I am quite satisfied on the point, but as a philosopher I want to learn the foundation of the inference. No reading nor inquiry has yet been able to remove my difficulty." In most cases, of course, the inference is correct; but all absolute inference from the present to the past and to the future is not linked by reason. We can do no more than find a rule according to which all known instances of an event have occurred, this gives no rule for unknown instances; therefore we may infer the contrary without collision of reason; con-

sequently, the general succession and recurrence of physical events with which we are acquainted, is no proof of invariable succession and recurrence of events and times with which we are unacquainted—is no proof against the miracles of Redemption. The antecedent probability is in favour of miracles, not against them: for "it is to be expected that an event unique in the world's history should be marked by accompaniments partaking of its own character" (Mansel, "Essay on Miracles").

Nature can only prevent miracles by enforcing that order, and the continuance of those events, with which we are acquainted; but Science proclaims that there is no such power of causation in nature, we are only acquainted with antecedents and consequents. The highly vaunted chain of nature, with which unbelievers thought to bind miracles and prevent their going forth, is proved to be a rope of sand: miracles march as strong men. If there are persons so defective in the choice intellectual and noble practical part of human character that they cannot persuade themselves, let them at least remember that it is as easy for them to be in error, as it is for the world to lie in wickedness. God's cabinets may open only for jewels, His secrets are made known but to few friends, even as the Spirit's whispers are heard distinctly and regarded by none but the holy. Some creatures spin and toil, yet have no understanding; there are understandings which neither spin nor toil, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. He who hath eyesight and insight will discern the miracle.

Put the question plainly—What scientific beliefs and facts do we contradict when we assert that a Super-

natural Power has on various occasions interfered with the operation of natural laws? We are told—"We deny the belief in the uniformity of nature; a belief so important that it is the foundation of all our practical judgments, and of all our scientific reasoning." We answer —It is absurd to think that a rare interference with the course of nature for a special purpose, in any way hinders our practical judgments or scientific reasoning: nature may be and is, notwithstanding miracles, for practical and scientific purposes uniform. We believe that oxygen and hydrogen will, under given conditions, combine to form water; and we believe it none the less because we also believe that Supernatural Power has sometimes interposed to prevent that result. Supernatural Power is one among the known and unknown powers at work in nature, but which never were, and perhaps never will be, reduced to comprehensible law. These unknown powers are so many and great that it is utterly impossible for human science to know that similar antecedents are always followed by similar effects; indeed similar effects are not unseldom produced by dissimilar antecedents; therefore belief in Supernatural interference is in no way inconsistent with the due uniformity of nature. Theology does not require us to modify our belief either as to the abstract or concrete parts of science; nor is science inconsistent with theology; matters of fact, which compose history in its widest sense, both of science and theology, confirm both.

A miracle is not so much contrary to nature, or unnatural, or a suspension of nature, as a superinduced nature. "Quæ fiunt præter cursum naturæ, non fiunt contra naturam" (S. Augustine). We hold that it is a

means of healing and restoring that which has been deranged through sin; and not so much for the continuance of faith, as to lay its foundations. It is no violation of nature for a man to roll away a stone; why may not an angel roll one from a sepulchre? The physician, by skill and means known to himself, cures a patient of fever; why should not Jesus, with greater skill and higher means, heal cases much more dangerous? We all know that moral evil produces material evil. Miracles enter nature with a promise of moral and physical amelioration. They are a manifestation that a portion of our world is already drawn into a higher order of things, of more extensive range and power, for unwonted and sacred uses.

Ignorance as to the cause of miracles and the manner of their operation is not a sufficient reason for refusal of them. There are many physical events which cannot be physically investigated, nor can any one be examined so fully that we attain essential knowledge of it, or are able to exclude the miraculous from it, for there may be a miracle in its every part. Some miracles are wrought by means partly known, for example, the Deluge—"The fountains of the great deep being broken up, and the windows of heaven opened." These figurative words indicate a natural operation, synchronism of nature's operations with the Divine Counsels.

"Καιρὸς
μέγιστος ἔργου παντός ἐστ' ἐπιστάτης."
SOPHOCLES, *Elect.*, 76.

"God, looking upon His own Omnipotence, knows all possibilites, looking upon His own Determinations, He see all futurities; looking upon His own Wisdom,

He beholds all varieties, all degrees and differences of being; which yet put not forth the least shadow of difference in Him with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

We have reason to believe that the known course of nature is not the only course. There are different natures according to the various classes of progressive beings in the universe. Every heaven has a voice, every sun its splendour, every planet its nature. There are sports in plants, eccentricities in animals, anomalies everywhere, subordination of lower to higher, two-sidedness and two-foldedness. There is the riddle of life, the greater puzzle of mind, the surpassing mystery of responsibility. Dead matter and blind force receive nobler nature and higher energy, until human consciousness receives, retains, reflects, a wonderful truth—God created the world "in gloriam suam" and "in salutem nostram." Cosmogony means the creation of worlds, and their investiture with changeable apparel of beauty. Men talk of laws that never fall into disuetude. That rightly means Divine maintenance of order by established, suitable, efficient, continuous, intervention of energy, to give rhythm and life-throb to worlds. This principle is vast and luminous, it fills and enlightens the universe;

> "Since God is ever present, ever felt,
> And when He vital breathes there must be joy."
>
> THOMSON'S *Hymn.*

Truth is what God thinks—what God works. Happiness is the harmony, and rest, and use, of God's powers. Holiness is what God wills. As our intellectual faculties attain truth—we think as God thinks, we work as God

works. The measure of our happiness is that right use and legitimate development of our nature by which it finds satisfaction in evermore tending towards God All-Glorious. In the progress of our moral voluntary powers to holiness—we will as God wills, and are satisfied with His satisfaction. To aid us in this upward path to the Supreme, we have the miracle of Revelation to our intelligence. Other miracles are for the amendment of vitiated nature, and are proof that a regenerative force has entered the world by which we may overcome all evil and obtain all good. It is a glorious Supernatural progress, but blessedly natural!

THOUGHT IX.

ELIMINATION OF CHANCE FROM THE UNIVERSE.

"The grand and indeed only character of truth is its capability of enduring the test of universal experience, and coming unchanged out of every possible form of fair discussion."—SIR JOHN HERSCHEL, *Discourse on Natural Philosophy*, p. 10.

The gift by which Truth makes us free is "an axis of power testing, using, controlling equal and opposite forces."—*A phrase altered from* FARADAY.

NATURE in all its parts, so far as our science extends, is linked together. Every part is subservient to the whole, and held in unity by innumerable correlations and adaptations. Physical Science says nothing about the original or initial conditions of matter, nor is it concerned with anything other than that which is. It can only say, "Given matter in a given condition, at a given time, and certain consequences will follow, and not otherwise." Science, nevertheless, clearly reveals the impossibility of prolonging existence indefinitely backwards; and shows that the present constitution of things, because of the universal tendency, through dissipation of heat, to equilibrium of forces, is temporary; eternal neither as to the past nor as to the future; not self-devised, but

derivative from what had gone before. The scientific fact may be thus formulated: Everything exists in such form that it possesses no discernible powers to originate, to locate, to maintain itself, otherwise than as part of a whole: a whole not merely made up of the constituent parts, but a whole so dominating the parts that they are not so greatly of use in and for themselves as for their use and relation to the whole. Now, if no part of the universe stands alone—as self-devised, and every part is derived from that which was before, it follows that the whole—consisting only of derivative and dependent parts—is not eternal whether as to the whole or the parts.

Now enter the region of metaphysics, and inquire—Was the primordial configuration of the matter of the universe of fortuitous derivation, or did it originate by irrational fate? Not by irrational fate: for mere impulse, apart from volitional intelligent creative energy, does not sufficiently account, in any reasonably conceivable way, for the existence of a world of organized beings as a result of the mere laws of dead matter; or for the derivation of very different forms from that in which was no difference. Only by design, or purpose, does it seem reasonably possible to possess adequate cause for that intelligible and intelligent variety of form, life, organism, intelligence, which has been evoked from the formless—the lifeless — the inorganic — the unintelligent. Nor can the origin and continuance of worlds be by fortuity; for though it can be said—"in the primordial condition of things, with which science starts, there may have been an infinity of chances against any one particular chance, chosen be-

forehand, being the real one; so soon as that one or any other, became the real, probability ceased to have meaning"—it is certain that the realization of any one chance by pure fortuity at any one moment could not ensure its permanency, nor render impossible the realization of any other chance at any other moment: for that which came, perchance, at any moment; not only could, perchance, pass away at any other moment, but would so chance — or chance were not chance. That chance should weave things into an intelligible whole, and give to every part useful and reasonable place and work, is an irrational and groundless assumption. In order that one chance may be permanent —rather, that chance cease to be chance—that which before was finite must become infinite, and throughout infinitude render it impossible for any other chance to be realized. Our reason cannot accept anything so irrational. It means that every one of the present localities, forces, conditions, beings, existences, adaptations, correlations, would have to be realized by one chance against other chances multiplied by all the moments in time, by all the localities in space, by all the actualities and possibilities of being. Hence, the fortuitous origin and continuance of a universe in which every part has fitness in various degrees for various purposes—fitness ranging from rudimentary states to most delicate and complex apparatus—fitness made and continued by processes of particular sets of conditions which render that fitness the only possible result, the conditions also being proved to have been given for that purpose, seeing that the frame of nature is what it is, nor can be either more or less—becomes, if chance is

chance, more and more inconceivable as our power of thought and calculation is great.

Nature not being eternal, nor self-made, but derivative; and that not by blind fate, nor fortuity; the existing state is by Intelligence. If so, it ought to furnish evidences of purpose such as no fortuitous or blind course could present. This, laying aside metaphysics, we now show by ascertained verities of physical science. The present condition of the universe arose out of matter which was equally or unequally diffused. Not equally diffused, for that would present a stable equilibrium maintained either by the absence of force, or by equal pressure of all forces in every direction. If matter was unequally diffused, then, as physical science can only do with matter as it is, we must regard the elements as possessing similar, or somewhat similar properties to those now existing, with many evident relations which accomplish innumerable far-off adaptations. Moreover, as an intelligible process, or an intelligible creation, with these manifold adaptations which our minds compel us to regard as designed, cannot exist apart from intelligence acting directly or indirectly; let us endow the atoms, as materialists do, with the potentialities, whatever they be, of life and intelligence. Will these atomic forces, particles of vitalities and intelligences, account for a cosmos?—cosmos meaning a world of intelligible order and beauty? No. They may, possibly, array themselves in kind, in rank, in separate armies; so that carbon and nitrogen, oxygen and hydrogen, earths and metals, hold their own; while particles of æther co-ordinate themselves into minute spheres to surround all other atoms, and spread through

boundless space to be the universal medium of heat, light, electricity. Then these little men may go about, and do their work fairly well—so far; but, though the different sorts of atoms vary in density and magnitude, those of a kind are probably the same and retain for ever their similitude; and the same particles of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen, possessing, so science says, invarying and invariable forces, cannot, of themselves, or by means of conjunction, so vary as to be, at any time or in any place, either animate or inanimate, as they will; these to form a fern, those a cedar, some a worm, others a whale; and, in more ambitious moments, construct the human shape. Further, those other little men, constituted as æther round the star Sirius, are required to co-ordinate themselves with that mighty sun's operations; and then adapt themselves to our earthly conditions, that the far-off light may be visible to the atoms of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen, forming the optical organs of an insect; and give itself to be analyzed by the same atoms when fashioned into the eye, nerve, brain, of man. The little men, to make a universe like that we live in, require faculties of omniscience and omnipotence to create adaptations and combinations infinite as the universe. They must act where they are not, every infinitesimal comprehend infinitude, and every momentary pulsation of time contain the power and duration of eternity. We surrender the absurdity: our world is not made by mere atomic and molecular movement. Every finite is not infinite, a part is not great as the whole. Science discerns that the universe is an intelligible unity, useful in every part; that an all-pervading cosmic principle gives force,

locality, magnitude, rendering every part of still greater use and meaning as to the whole. The principle is not an atomic attribute, but something superior—subordinating the atoms; not a material complement of the whole, but that without which neither the whole nor parts could be; an essential Entity—Mind, the Intelligent Cause of all other being.

This essential Entity, the Intelligent Cause of all, we say is God; because the works seem beyond aught else than Deity, and unfold essential unity as the creative principle of infinite variety. It is not matter, any more than a man is his clothing, but the Ruler of matter. Though in the parts, it is not of the parts. Though in the whole, not of the whole. It is something entering time, and its every moment, as eternity enters; something entering matter, every particle of it—as Omnipotence enters; something in vitality—as the Self-living; something in all intelligence—as the Omniscient. God alone is the equivalent. Science and philosophy show that, in some transcendental manner, there is the conjunction of two eternities—the past and future, in every moment of time; that in transcendental manner, infinitude, contained in every point of space, centralizes the forces of the universe in every particle of matter; while every infinitesimal space and force evermore reveals to scientific insight intensifying inner dimensions; until every moment enshrines eternity; every space-point, every force-locus, localizes infinity and almightiness. On this account we affirm—The works displayed in the universe are worthy of and are wrought by Deity. No chance world, no self-made world, so far

as our faculties are able to know, could furnish similar evidence of purpose, of power acting intelligently and intelligibly, of continuous and universal adaptation and correlation.

"Te Deum laudamus: Te Dominum confitemur.
Te æternum Patrem omnis terra veneratur."

THOUGHT X.

COSMICAL AND MENTAL ANALOGIES OF THE MIRACULOUS.

"Per angusta itur ad augusta."

"The wise man is but a clever infant spelling letters from a hieroglyphical prophetic book, the lexicon of which lies in eternity."—CARLYLE.

"There is a correspondence between things spiritual and things natural, and by means of this correspondence their conjunction takes place."

VAST and various, strange and unexpected, as are the worlds, marvellous unity underlies the strange diversity. So all-prevailing is the unity that the strangest occurrences, things which appear impossible to common experience, are verified by ordinary scientific knowledge, and in a manner wonderfully simple. All things are akin. Whatever is abnormal in miraculous operation, we find represented in cosmical and mental analogies, surprises and catastrophes.

The suspension of gravity possesses permanent analogy in the law of diffusion of gases. The law of universal gravitation once established, we might regard as absolutely necessary; but that would assume God could not have constructed the world on any other plan, nor subjected matter to other laws and different combina-

tions. As if to prevent such an error, we find a sort of opposing law—the diffusion of gases. The diffusion is not more capable of scientific explanation than are the ancient miracles. Make an experiment:—Hydrogen is the lightest body known. Take a bottle of it, and by means of a narrow glass tube connect it vertically with a bottle of oxygen—a much heavier gas, the oxygen being below. The oxygen, despite the action of gravity, will ascend: a complete mixture of the two gases in both bottles being the result. Other examples are afforded by the chemical combination of light bodies which become heavier in the process, and of heavier bodies which become lighter.

An unbeliever may fairly say that results which he can produce, as often as he will, do not help him to accept a miracle—a result which he cannot produce. Reply—Miracles are refused on the plea that they break the uniformity of nature, but if that uniformity is broken in upon by nature itself, so that the law of gravity, which altereth not, is set at nought, or superseded, or controlled, by the law of diffusion of gases and by vital action; these facts, capable of repetition according to our will, are analogous to other facts, or miracles, which can only be produced by the Divine Will. That the natural marvels are permanent, but the miracles temporary, renders the former useful as abiding witnesses and symbols of the latter.

Isomerism, a term applied to bodies containing the same elements, united in the same proportions, but differing in their physical, physiological, and chemical properties, exhibits marvels of surprising character. Things possessing the same elements, in like number and pro-

portions, may so differ, through some hidden process that their physical, chemical, physiological properties become and remain permanently dissimilar. If a man retort—"All this no more concerns miracles than water does wine;" we reply "Even so, but the water was made wine."

Electricity and magnetism are full of mysteries. Take a cube, or sphere of copper, suspend it by a twisted cord; so that it be made to spin, by untwisting, between the poles of an electro-magnet. It experiences the retardation due to friction only; but, on the supervention of the magnetic force, the rotation is suddenly arrested. Faraday showed by an interesting experiment, that in passing a plate of copper rapidly to and fro between the magnetic poles, you seem to be cutting cheese, though nothing is visible: space becomes as if it were a kind of solid. This human use of the visible, in invisible operation, for production of tangible effects, is a natural symbol of the supernatural.

Various miracles of preservation, and of destruction, have natural analogies in the preservation of ice amidst flame, in the ignition of phosphoretted hydrogen at ordinary temperature, the burning of air in coal-gas, in combustion proceeding without flames, and in those experiments by which light is extracted from darkness, and heat from cold. It is true that these facts, though enlarged and multiplied a hundred-fold, are not equivalents of miracles; but they show an unexplainable permanent variety somewhat akin to various inexplicable temporary varieties.

Phosphorus may be yellow, or white like porcelain, or black, or red. In the clear transparent form it is

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yellow, soft, a wax-like body, tasteless; but, in solution, it is of a sharp pungent flavour. Common phosphorus, melted and then suddenly cooled to 32° F., becomes black. The yellow is made of a dull red colour, without taste and odour, by heating in an atmosphere in which it cannot oxidize. The red variety is not poisonous. All the others are active poisons. Do not count little fishes worth nothing—except in relation to your own inside. Even as there are visible and invisible things on this side the curtain, they are not all invisible on the other side: they may come into view as Heaven-sent manna. What we perceive is almost infinitesimal as compared with the whole; for we cannot set bounds to the Infinite Being, nor to His works; and "for all we can ever know there may be endless aspects of existence unimaginable to us" (Spinoza, Frederick Pollock, p. 167).

Oxygen, sustainer of life, and the great burner-up of dead organic matter, is—when compressed—the most fearful poison known. This reminds one of knowledge, that sweet pure light which guides our well handling of life's daily things; but delighted in, to the neglect of that inward presence of generous purpose which by hidden music prompts our action toward some great good, we look at holy things as a delusion; or see them with soul unstirred, and the spirit dies.

Sulphur, when separated from a compound at the positive pole of the battery, is soluble in carbonic disulphide; when separated at the negative pole of the battery, it is insoluble in carbonic disulphide. Heated to 280° F., it becomes liquid; continue and increase the heat to 350° F., then it is so thick and viscid that it will not fall from the inverted vessel. At from 350° to

500° F., the fluidity is restored, and it takes a dull brown colour. Pour it then into cold water and the elastic variety is produced. In cooling it passes inversely through the same stages; becoming viscous, then fluid, and finally solid. We have here physical analogies of our mental states; and natural pictures of some supernatural changes, recorded in Scripture, concerning the lifting up of things into new and unwonted uses. In other words—"the inner and the outer world are not really different and parallel, but one and the same world under two aspects" (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 178). If we do not endeavour to bring our particular work to the level of that we see to be best, then—

> "The devil tempts us not—'tis we tempt him,
> Beckoning his skill with opportunity."

Allotropism, or the capability of compound bodies, having the same percentage and molecular composition, of existing in more than one shape, finds startling and surpassing examples amongst the old marvels. There are manifold changes in the nature of things which science can only register, not explain; strange and incomprehensible marvels which show that we cannot draw a line between acts of God which seem to require no intermediate agent, and the results or effects produced by what seem ordinary mechanical operations. They do not reduce miracles to a level with inexplicable physical facts, the facts are merely a ladder by which we obtain a higher view.

Accounts of falling stones, darkness and light, sudden appearances of stars, are exemplified in the fall of aërolites, in the October and November meteors, in the

various mysterious darknesses related in the history of astronomy; in the appearances, disappearances, and blazings forth of stars into splendour, of which there are many historic records. These analogies, some permanent, others periodic, some frequent, others of rare occurrence, are exhibitions of variety, startling and extensive, in which Nature prophesies of the miraculous.

> "There are more things in heaven and earth
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy;"

and we wisely maintain that there is a possibility of phenomena which do not so much oppose as transcend the Laws of Physics.

Miracles have similitudes in those natural changes by which similar become dissimilar. In chemical combination, for example, we obtain effects which bear no resemblance sensibly, chemically, physically, or physiologically, to the constituent elements. Indeed we have no means of estimating the force of affinity absolutely, and very uncertain means of estimating it relatively. Like will consort with like, or will refuse; negatives will agree, or differ yet more. Strychnia, a deadly poison, is formed by the combination of those harmless bodies —carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen. Sulphuric acid, a corrosive poison, is made by the combination of sulphur, hydrogen, oxygen. In vital action, by means of a fluid, all the elements of growth and nutrition are elaborated, and the various secretions have their composition determined. Our rising from sleep, and those resurrections, not uncommon, from death-like torpor and apparent insensibility, are parables of the resurrection; though raising the dead, marvellous as

a new creation, is not a raising of the old mortal body; those who become new men in this life have new bodies in the world to come. Awaking from sleep, we do not possess the whole of the body with which we lay down; during the state of unconsciousness a part of ourselves, already dead, is lost—the loss preparing for future gain. In the final sleep of our body, there will be a putting off of all that is dead, and a clothing upon with that which possesses fulness and newness of life.

The Bible reveals many unexpected departures from rule, the happening of unusual things, the production of great by small, *vice versâ*, and marvellous unlikelies, which have counterpart in many interesting natural varieties. Hydrogen is believed to be a gaseous metal, bromine is the only liquid non-metallic element, mercury is the only liquid metallic element, and gallium melts by heat of the hand. Some metals are so soft that they can be indented with the nail, others can be cut with a knife. Compounds of nitrogen and oxygen, things which destroy if inspired more than a few seconds, form laughing-gas; substances become differently constituted at different pressures, stable or unstable, of great heat or intense cold. Selenium is found in various allotropic forms. Carbon is the diamond, graphite, coke, soot, lampblack, wood charcoal, animal charcoal, tinder. Probably all elements are able to assume every form of solid, fluid, gas. These varieties, existing where none are looked for; departures from rule where and when rule seems strictest; production by means apparently inadequate; the existence of the unlikely where the unlikely is almost impossible; take their place as part of the ordinary course and work

of nature, and may be fairly counted natural features of the supernatural. Strictly speaking, nevertheless, they are not so much enhancements of the natural, as embodiments of the more mysterious truth: that, in every moment of time and portion of space, "things must exist, not only after the manner in which they are manifested to us, but in every manner which infinite understanding can conceive" (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 167).

It may be said, the examples do not illustrate miracles except as showing varieties and mysteries in nature. Let it be so: a natural event occurs in a course of nature according to some known or unknown, general or special rule; a supernatural takes place by some other general or special rule brought into determinate relation with the known and the knowable. The region of the unknown not less exceeds the known than the finite is exceeded by infinitude. No materialist seriously maintains that the universe consists of infinite space, empty—except for those things which we happen at any moment to perceive. The same substances exist in different shapes and states; all properties need conditions to call them forth; and many bodies, changed from one state to another, can again be changed from the second to the first. These varieties come into the world—not as things of perturbation and unnaturalness; but that we may hear a voice, know of laws, and be so attuned to spiritual music, that our souls partake of new potencies, be subject to new laws, and enter new stages, in the universal plan of teleological development. For example—"Faith is the evidence of things not seen," but there is a personal subjective evidence which reveals

the unseen. This high personal experience—like things that are the same yet differ—has a peculiarity in every man, indicates that there are no bounds to infinite being, that existence has divers aspects to intelligence other than ours, and rises above ordinary mind even as the unusual is out of the common.

Those not able to discern inner meaning and power, do not discover the purpose and complicate process by which mountains are raised, crumbled, dissolved, and carried into the sea; see no mystery in the dew and rain and cloud; nor find the wonderful in any natural operation. They may, however, learn of miracles by the fact that every vital process, and every mental exercise, is more artistic than any outer operation by poet, or painter, or sculptor. The marble under the artist's hands, receiving blow by blow and touch by touch, seems to live in our spirit when it has attained the perfect image of manly strength or feminine beauty. The vital process in human nature, constructs in manner exquisite, by operation mysterious, with plan felicitous, with result wonderful, the embryo—the child—the man. Not a dead form, as the marble, but a living creature. Not incapable of thought, as the statue, but instinct with intelligence. The vital and mental process manifests a higher intelligence than is displayed by artistic elaboration of marble. It is also the object of a yet more subtle operation: that manifestation of the spirit which is given to every man that he may profit withal (1 Cor. xii. 7). Hence the calm firmness, the serene sense of duty, which devout men display. Their faith is not only the adhesion of reason, but a humble loving confidence of the spirit. They do not believe perforce—

as by miracle, but are won by the beauty of holiness, are touched by a sense of Heaven. Our God is master of His work even to the smallest detail of execution. "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth . . . whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. v. 9, iv. 30).

There are men, of the inspiration that made martyrs mighty, who overcome the world, whose spirit within the flesh proceeds beyond the flesh, who live and walk with God—partake of God. They exhibit the truth thus set forth—"Whatever exists must exist as much as it can; and that whose nature is to exist, or which exists of itself, is under no possible restraint, either internal or external, which could set bounds to its existence" (Spinoza, Frederick Pollock, p. 166). The marvels surrounding them, wrought by them, performed on their behalf, are not disturbances of nature or unnatural; but indications that the present nature of things is not eternally fixed, that material existence is not unchangeable. These men have an inner sense, a spiritual faculty, which enables them to know, discern, and use something akin to the supernatural (1 Cor. ii. 15, xii. 8–10). The phenomena which accompany certain morbid conditions of the brain furnish almost a parody of the spiritual state. De Quincey states that in some of his dreams—"The sea appeared to him paved with innumerable forms, supplicating, wrathful, or despairing; rising in myriads, in generations, for ages; that, again, an imaginary architecture was pictured to him in vivid and unsupportable splendour, capable of increasing in size and infinite reproduction." Sometimes he seemed to live fifty or one hundred years in a single night; he

had feelings which seemed to last a thousand years, or rather for a lapse of time which exceeded the limits of human experience. In men of genius, the high, imaginative, creative power, partakes of the wonderful. To these, the meanest flower that grows comes as a messenger from God. They share "the large æther and the purple light" with which the Supernatural clotheth all things.

> "Largior hic campos æther et lumine vestit
> Purpureo."
>
> VIRGIL, *Æneid*, vi. 640.

They know that all is miraculous from the least to the greatest, from an imperceptible insect to an archangel. They remember our Lord's words about miracles (Luke x. 20), and rejoice rather in those religious and moral blessings which glorify body and soul. They are conscious of being drawn into the regions of the blessed, that the affinity of their spirit with the Divine Spirit is sealed, their heart and mind so ascend that they would be glad to return to earth no more. Such experiences are mental analogies by which they lay hold of the powers of the world to come, and feel beginnings of immortality.

We cast in our lot with these heroes, not with those who render life but a dim and dusky stage, the sweet Eden-garden scenes and fair heavenly perspective thrust out of sight.

> "We trust we have not wasted breath:
> We think we are not wholly brain—
> * * * * *
> "Nor only cunning casts in clay;
> Let science prove we are, and then
> What matters science unto men,
> At least to us? We still would pray!"
>
> *In Memoriam.*

THOUGHT XI.

MIRACLES ARE CREDIBLE.

"The first note of interrogation found in the Bible follows a doubt-injecting word of the demon-serpent to our first parents, 'Hath God said?' Then came the flattering announcement which modern philosophy is so ready to repeat, 'Ye shall be as gods.'"—CHRISTLIEB, *Christian Belief.*

"A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and, as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined."—DAVID HUME.

THE above statement, by David Hume, is an example of the narrowness wrought in the minds of men who habitually refuse the miraculous.

That a miracle does not agree with the usual course of antecedent and sequence that most men experience is true; but that our present experience of natural order is the essential and only one is utterly false. We know about as well as we can know scientific facts, that existing antecedents and effects arose out of a state of things altogether at variance with the present state: hence, if miracles are incredible—as contrary to law; the present order of things, having risen out of a state wholly at variance, is in no wise to be believed—which is absurd.

A miracle is not a violation of the laws of nature. The order of nature is respected. It is the entrance of a new thing, by power of the Creator, to sustain and ameliorate nature. It is unnatural that so much misery exists—not that the Saviour by purity of life seeks to remove it; unnatural that the Only Righteous One should die on the cross—not that He should rise from the grave. He who observes how beautifully the life of Christ is in obedience to every physical and moral law, how perfectly He represents the purity of human nature, will recognize that life as a life-long miracle apart from the miracles He wrought; and such a miracle is a sign and seal of the connection between nature and spirit, truth and goodness, God and holiness. Nature is all that it contains, and there are laws of matter, laws of life, laws of mind; and if to teach mind, save life, glorify matter, the will of God is revealed to men, it is not unnatural for the course of nature to receive Divine influence. What other credentials than the miraculous can accredit God's messenger? With regard to Judaism and Christianity, the notion of their propagation without miracles, seeing that all their essential facts are miraculous, is more contrary to sound judgment than the belief that they were established and maintained by miracles.

To talk of our own firm and unalterable experience of laws being proof that no other men had a variable experience, is equal to the absurdity of saying that our experience and knowledge cover all possible experience and knowledge. Vary Hume's argument—"There must be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit

that appellation; and as uniform experience amounts to proof, there is here direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracles; nor can such proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by opposite proof, which is superior."

The fallacy is threefold: 1, in the assumption that our experience is uniform; 2, that our uniform experience is universal; 3, that our exceptional experience as to the miraculous is inferior to our so-called uniform experience concerning nature's ordinary course.

1. There is no such thing as uniform experience. Those who possess the largest acquaintance with nature know of so many startling surprises, that whatever comes within the range of possibility cannot be regarded as wholly improbable. This has always been known—

"οὐκ ἐστ' ἄελπτον οὐδὲν."

2. Even were our own experience uniform, that would not measure nor fix the limits of the actual to other men, in other times, in other circumstances. All the present inhabitants of the world might say—"We have not seen a miracle, not one of us has been present at any time, in any place where a miracle was wrought"—but their evidence would be of no avail against that of the trustworthy intelligent capable men who were present in the place and at the time and did see that a miracle was wrought.

3. "Miracles cannot be rendered credible, but by an opposite proof, which is superior." If it be required that the few alleged miracles, which a small number of men declare that they have witnessed, be rendered credible

by proof derived from experience as large as that of the many who have not seen a miracle, the requirement is unreasonable. We, nevertheless, as if to verify the assertion—The impossible is the only thing which is sure to happen, assay to give the required proof:—

The invariable experience of men is that they are unable to attain actual cognition of causes, can only know things as antecedents and consequents. The cause of the simplest as of the greatest events is inscrutable. We do not know the cause of gravity, nor of electricity, nor of light, nor of heat, nor of life, nor of intelligence. Far from our being able to give account of them, to explain their origin, to afford reasons for their continuance, they are wrapped in mystery, interpenetrated and pierced by energies of which we only know that we know nothing. The universal experience of men is—that the whole of nature is a marvel. We do not find any indication of such a chain of causation as would, of itself, suffice to explain the system of nature. It possibly exists in infinite variety in every possible way. While freely acknowledging the operation of natural causes, and thinking that our scientific theories of laws will obtain higher generalization, we do not see any possibility of eliminating will and design from the universe. Professor J. S. Brewer says, "Will is something which cannot be resolved into anything else." Will and design render every event, even the commonest, miraculous. Where all is miraculous, the existence and use of by-paths for use of wonted and unwonted energies, is but a small marvel. Thus we establish miracle by evidence commensurate with the experience of mankind.

Opponents endeavour to take off the edge of our

argument by the assertion—"Nothing is accounted a miracle if it ever happen in the common course of nature." It seems a little silly, if the foundation of everything is miraculous, to assert that the superstructure is no marvel; nor is it scientific, if that foundation be a variety as compared with the preceding, to deny the possibility of further variety. Really, the peculiar and special events, called miracles, are no great marvel. They arise out of unlike preceding states, but are as nothing if compared with the whole of nature, in all its new and special things, arising out of other unlike preceding states.

We now enter the moral argument. David Hume shall state a case:—"When any one tells me that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself whether it be more probable that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact which he relates should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the other; and according to the superiority which I can discover, I pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates, then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion."

Here again is the fatal fallacy which assumes that the rareness and marvellous nature of an event tell against the good faith and intelligence of the witnesses. As if want of experience in the many, the ignorance of those not present at the time, nor in the place of the rare occurrence, should avail against the positive accurate knowledge and experience of those who were present. The ignorant and wicked men who brought about the

crucifixion of Jesus, and who did not see Him after the resurrection, are to be believed rather than the honest upright and intelligent five hundred who, with the Apostles, did see Him, and constantly affirmed that He had risen from the dead. We appeal against such a decision: the Apostles were not men who would deceive, nor could they have been deceived, nor was Jesus, in any sense, an impostor. The falsity of their testimony and of Christ's conduct would be more miraculous than the events they affirm.

We will make even the unbeliever a believer. Materialists, on the evidence of a bone, or part of one, or even the impression of it made in old time on clay or sand, firmly believe in creatures which they have never seen. It is but a fraction of their knowledge that scientific men can verify, the greater part rests on testimony. The evidence for miracles rests on testimony much more credible. We have not the bare bone of an extinct organism, but the organism itself—Christianity, with miracles as the life-blood pulsing through every part. The doctrines and miracles of Holy Scripture are sustained by a substratum of facts without which there is no explanation of a whole nation's history, laws, customs, manners, ritual, monuments, policy, social and private and religious life. Destroy miracles, and the Jewish history is without meaning (see Leslie's "Short and Easy Method with the Deists"). That is not all: the history, miracles, prophecies, form a vast plan. A plan not merely in connection with a Saviour to come, but with the grandest facts; creation, ruin, revelation, redemption, sanctification, glorification; facts which take up the very dregs of earth in order

ultimately to glorify the whole. The prophecies, which run through every age, are not vague guesses, nor merely sagacious surmises, but marvellous statements so disguised as not to provoke opposition against their fulfilment, nor in their fulfilment to coerce belief. They leave our intelligence and conscience free to judge, honestly and adequately to investigate the whole; while the correctness as to the creative account, the Messianic statements, the Jewish destiny, the spread of Christianity, is intellectually and morally irresistible. The laws of evidence, of human nature, render it impossible that all these can be false, or that the best and purest of our race could unite age after age in a gigantic swindle.

> "Whence, but from Heaven, could men unskilled in arts,
> In several ages born, in several parts,
> Weave such agreeing truths? Or how, or why
> Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
> Unask'd their gains, ungrateful their advice,
> Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price."
>
> DRYDEN, *Religio Laici.*

That so marvellous a plan, correlated in every part, wrought out by many minds, in course of many ages, despite almost insuperable difficulties, should be effectuated by knaves who, strange to say, were the best of men, is incredible. That these knaves, deceived and deceiving, explain the mysteries and heal the miseries of life; and, without knowing one another, confirm one another's testimony; is a marvel indeed. If prophets and apostles and martyrs were deceived and deceivers; if events, not witnessed, were ever and ever affirmed as witnessed by the most upright of mankind; if miracles are constantly affirmed by men who wrought them, and by thousands more who said they had seen miracles

for themselves; and if the whole was a delusion, we have a miracle which dwarfs every other marvel. Let the unbeliever choose: there is the lesser miracle, faith in which, proved by a pure loving life, will confer everlasting blessedness; there is the greater miracle—that which makes all the good bad, all the wise fools, all the truthful liars; to accept this leaves him without hope, and exposes him to the peril of eternal ruin. "The difficulties of belief are great, the difficulties of unbelief are greater" (Bishop Lonsdale).

An orderly array of a few facts confirms the foregoing statement.

I. We are all conscious of a tendency towards the marvellous—"Natura hæsitate commovetur" (Cicero, "Heren," iii. 36); "Miracula quædam inusitata servavit quæ faceret ut dormiēntes homines excitaret" (S. Augustine). Not only do we experience pleasure when our surprise and wonder are excited, but we possess a deep conviction that this tendency and these emotions are an essential part of our inner nature, and correspond to something without. From earliest times, in rude prehistoric memorials, in the rituals of worship amongst all nations—barbarous and civilized, there is proof of ineradicable conviction as to the reality of supernatural events. He who believes in God believes in the greatest miracle; and if one does not believe in God, he must believe in the miracle of the world, which world—whether God-made or self-made—is in its preservation and development full of miracles.

II. Many spurious miracles having been detected—"Miracula magica, pleraque specie tenus, mortalium sensus imaginaria ludificatione decipiunt" (S. Augustine)

—fanatics being so ready to lie, heated imaginations leading to credulity, and possession of supernatural gifts conferring a splendid and desirable halo of renown, men of prudence in all ages rightly refused credit, so far as possible, to whatever opposed common custom and experience. Not because they were unbelieving as to miracles, but that in due use of their power, intelligence, experience, they might separate the true from the false. The credulity that accepts all things without asking a question, and the sagacity demanding verification before yielding assent, alike rest on the persuasion that our world is the scene of strange marvels. If the occasion of any miracle were trifling and frivolous we should hesitate to accept it, because a miracle is no trifle. "Miracula alio fine, aliaque potestate et jure fiunt per magos et per sanctos" (S. Augustine). "The internal law for the human workers of miracles is this: their external miraculous power must be connected with inward and spiritual miracles taking place in their hearts. By means of the latter they must be raised into a specially close communion with God. . . . The internal law for men, in whom the miracles of salvation take place, is faith" (Christlieb, "Christian Belief," p. 322).

III. We refuse purposeless miracles, done in a corner, or where verification was impossible; and we put away all romantic narratives coming from barbarous nations; but the impossibility of rationally or scientifically explaining away the universal conviction and expectation of marvels, and the special verification by the Jews of the Scripture miracles, afford proof to our best thinkers that there is a substratum of reality. Barbarous

men would not be barbarous if gifted with genius and imagination to create an idea of God, and to invent miracles as works by which He manifested Himself; nor would bad men, if they could, give the world such a book as the Bible. The ablest of our race, mathematicians, naturalists, chemists, philosophers, accept Holy Scripture and its Miracles as really a lesser marvel, and more in accordance with the facts of human nature, than that rejection which brands universal consciousness and conviction of the supernatural, sublimest thought and holiest aspirations, as a delusion and a snare.

IV. These miracles are in connection with the grandest and purest system of morals in existence; they are parts of a design, long before revealed, and wrought in confirmation of it. They are divine sign-manuals of doctrine, precept, ritual, sacrifice, festival, and law. They concern secret things of the past, and wonders in the future, not less miraculous. They belong to a mysterious scheme of Providence. They are object lessons in science which physicists have not yet mastered, and indicate a wealth of unknown energies the exploration of which is but begun. They are essential elements in the only rational religion possessed by the world, and destruction of faith in them will falsify history, and take conviction of its verity from the minds of all thoughtful men. They are wrought for a high and holy end, an end worthy of the Almighty Creator, by God-sent workers who cannot use the Divine Power arbitrarily, but only in virtue of high personal spiritual communion with God. No language, not even an angel's voice, can proclaim more intelligibly, that God is revealing His purpose. No other religion has been set up and con-

firmed by miracles. A series of works like those on which Christianity rests is unique in the world. They are not so far off as to be lost in the dim mist of great antiquity. Twenty or thirty individuals join hands, and unite all the centuries since Christ. The Church, treasury of truth, retains the precious deposit by a power which never fails. The Church is like an organism. A living consciousness as to the truth of miracles is perennial. The Church is always the same Body, preserving the memory of events and their meaning, and celebrating in ritual and doctrine their Divinity. Take away miracles, then all sacred doctrine, all promises, all hopes, perish, for they are founded on miracles. Not one pure gleam would shine from the Good Land to enlighten our darkness, or enable us to discern between the righteous and the wicked. That the Jewish scheme, knit to the Christian by a hundred ties, is a delusion; that prophets and martyrs were mad; that Moses was a juggler; Isaiah, an enthusiast; Elijah, a lunatic; our Blessed Lord, a knave; and the Apostles, dupes; we cannot believe. No one, in our day, is so wicked and foolish as to say this: but what avails it for modern infidelity, which does not cry with Voltaire—"Ecraser l'infâme!" to exalt our Lord and the ancient prophets to the highest pitch of excellence, and then to assert that those who knew them best, whose special business it was to give a true record of their words and acts, made them the originators—we must speak plainly—of the most astounding falsehoods—made them, though true men, to fill the world with lies? The thing is incredible. Why, every caution was taken against fallibility. The evidence of numerous unimpeached beholders, the suf-

frages not only of the Apostles as to Christ's miracles, but the testimony of thousands both as to His and their works, render mistake impossible. Enemies were always present, eager and able to detect fraud; and the marvels were of a nature as to which there could be no delusion. That the greatest and purest men in the world have through all ages been worshipping they know not what; regarding books as true and holy which are essentially false and wicked; and have been made truthful, chaste, heroic, and God-fearing, by that which is built on the greatest lies; would be a more astounding marvel than the maddest of men ever thought of, or the most Satanic of men could devise. It can only be accepted by men who believe anything—provided it is not in the Bible.

V. Miracles were mostly wrought in, for, and by, the men of a nation who are an enigma to the world. Far from being credulous, they were and are the most unbelieving of all races. Their history, in Old and New Testament, or on modern page, is proof. Though incapable of weaving a mythical element in their records, their annals, their literature, their great men, their national character, their past, their present, all good expected in the future, are bound up with a system miraculously bestowed and confirmed. The miracles were unwillingly received, frequently resisted; publicly wrought, for the most part, and always capable of verification or of disproof. They were done amongst a race of purest lives, of justest laws, of religion the most reasonable yet most remarkable in the world. A people wonderful for genius—not in the Hellenic sense, but in special faculty for things divine, the only worshippers of One supreme and most holy God; a people in whom

alone resided a comprehensive continuous spirit of prophecy; whose great men render all other human majesties of little renown. To charge them with ignorance and barbarism dwarfs and disgraces the accuser.

It would be a greater miracle were there no miracle. Our opponents, by their own selected system of argument, are bound to choose the lesser marvel; they must, as true men, honest men, reasonable men, receive the miracles recorded in Holy Scripture as credible according to custom of thought, as confirmed by experience of life, as worthy of all acceptation.

THOUGHT XII.

SCIENTIFIC MEN ARE BOUND TO ACCEPT MIRACLES.

"Life exists in nature as an instrumental cause. Motion in nature is action in a living subject. Modification in nature is sensation in a living thing. What is effort in nature is will in life. What is distinction of light in nature is intellect in that which lives."—*From Note-Book.*

"There are difficulties with the Bible, but there are tenfold more without it."—*From Note-Book.*

DAVID HUME says, "A miracle can never be proved so as to be the foundation of a system of religion." Similar assertions are frequently made by men who count themselves too clever for the Common Faith. Their cleverness is spoiled by a great fault—want of common sense. They do not use in religious matters that common sense which does not desert them in worldly affairs. No man, unless blinded by unbelief, could make so rash and ignorant and false a statement in the face of Christianity. Christianity is founded on the Miracle of Christ's Resurrection: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain" (1 Cor. xv. 17). This miracle confirms all other miracles, and with the Incarnation—manifesting Christ's Divine nature—gives God's own signature to our Faith; the purest, the greatest, the most marvellous Faith the world has ever possessed. To assert—"A miracle can never

be proved so as to be the foundation of a system of religion"—stands convicted of falsity in the presence of that innumerable host of mathematicians, physicists, philosophers, and statesmen, whose science and faith have made them blessings to the world.

The following is a necessary inference from Hume's false premises:—"Though the being to whom the miracle is ascribed, be in this case the Almighty, it does not, upon that account, become a whit more probable; since it is impossible for us to know the actions or attributes of such a Being, otherwise than from the experience which we have of his productions in the usual course of nature" ("Philosophical Works of David Hume," vol. iv. sec. 10, Miracles, p. 148, edit. 1854). The grossness of error will be exposed by a little reflection.

We know of God in many ways: by the usual and unusual course of nature; by events which occur hourly, and by those happening only once in a century, or in a millennium. We know of God whenever and however He pleases to reveal Himself: whether in Word or in Work. If God cannot reveal Himself to the consciousness of men, how is it that they are conscious of Him? If He cannot reveal Himself in the literature of the world, how is it that literature is full of Him? If He cannot manifest Himself in miracles and marvels, how is it that the whole world believes that He does so manifest Himself? Men reason to support their opinions, and argue for their doctrines. It is not becoming that God should speak as a philosopher who disputes, and as a sceptic who doubts; no, He speaks as one who decides, and sustains that He says by deeds of omnipotence. Miracles are His broad seal annexed to the charter of

salvation; they attest the truth of prophets, and the Divine Sonship of Christ.

The usual course of nature is in no respect commonplace, but full of marvels. These marvels are so akin to miracles that we do not know their essential cause, nor are their antecedents invariable. Dead inorganic matter is fashioned into living organisms; this, day by day, is a quickening of the dead—life is a miracle to the dead. What Müller said remains true—"Only a miraculous interruption of the natural laws can form the living organism out of lifeless matter." Sleep is like death, and waking from sleep is newness of life; sleeping and awaking are a figurative dying and living in the same day—not the less marvellous but so common. "I am not so bold as to deny that a human body, keeping the circulation of the blood and other properties which are esteemed the marks of life, may nevertheless receive another nature wholly different from its former one. For no reason compels me to hold that the body dies not unless it become a corpse; nay, experience would seem to suggest the contrary" (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 262).

> "Miracles precede and follow all our steps;
> To them we are so gradually, unconsciously
> Inured, that they appear to us quite natural,
> And unaccustomed only seems miraculous."
>
> *Slightly altered from* RÜCKERT.

There are times when men breathe not, and the pulse is still; when coldness of the flesh, and absence of all vital functions, seem to prove that life is departed; the physician says, "Dead," but the man is alive. Resurrections are not uncommon: men of common sense, of

uncommon sense too, regard them as hinting of that great revival when the dead, returned to inorganic matter, shall come back living organisms of a wonderful spiritual nature; for the most exalted consciousness and the most elevated phenomena are effects of a complication which has come out of the simplest elements.

As to knowing of God by His works, we can and do know. The earliest use of this argument, if we except the Old Testament, is found in Xenophon ("Mem.," i. 4, 5). We know Him, bringing the visible from the invisible—by Creation; by fashioning all things—as were He an Architect; by the painting of natural pictures—as were He an Artist; by making of organisms—as were He a wonderful Mechanic; by quickening into life—Himself being the Source of it. Chaucer said very well—"Nature is the Vicar of Almighty God." Every theist probably allows this; yet every operation, whether wrought indirectly by means, or directly without means, is miraculous. Further—we know God as so fashioning our frame that we are consciously His children. What a marvel is the action of spirit on matter! What a wonder the law of conscience, it excels all the laws of nature! We think that as parents communicate to offspring their own nature, disposition, faculties, and character; so our sense of Divine life, love for, and desire to please Divinity, are a wonderful heredity. Nor is that all—Jean Reynaud says, "I have no doubt whatever that if there existed but one opening, through which we could behold the mysterious edifice of the universe, the people of the most distant countries would concentrate themselves on that privileged spot . . . what affects me most is not the splendour of powerful masses,

nor the prodigious distances that separate sun from sun, nor their accumulation, nor the duration of their revolutions, nor the marvellous pale nebulous clusters suspended in the heights—every particle a world: no! It is the presence of countless myriads of souls in those glorious dwellings . . . The scintillations of the stars seem to me an image of the looks which cross each other in the realms of space . . . Thanks for the revelations of night." Ay, and thanks for the revelations of day: we do know of God. Countless beings through the same space, the same æther, precipitate themselves across the varied tumults of life towards the same end. What experiences! What alternations of good and ill! What passions! What varieties of fate! In all the immobility what wonderful change! In every destiny what a decree! Is it not the Almighty decreeing judgment? and are not His judgments actually in operation? and do not we, knowing but the elements of true science, call it—"Survival of the fittest?"

Some materialists answer, "Cause must be proportioned to the effect; and if we exactly and precisely proportion it, we shall never find in it any qualities which point further, or afford an inference concerning any other design and performance." This is a pretentious and erroneous saying: for we know neither the whole of any cause, nor the whole of any effect. Take it thus, and the error is seen at once—a hundred-ton steam-hammer cracks a nut, if we exactly and precisely apportion the cause to the effect we shall never find any qualities in the steam-hammer which point further, or afford an inference concerning any other design or performance. Dr. Johnson said of some one—"He was, no doubt, dull

naturally; but he must have taken a great deal of pains to become as dull as he is now." Not less dull are those who would "crib and cabin" the Almighty within their own little mechanical problems. We find antecedents and consequents in nature which go beyond nature, we acquire in this life approximate notions of the life to come, and ascend from created things to their Creator. Our ideas of nature are not necessarily and solely those of mechanical effect; they partake of that enlargement which life, intelligence, and moral responsibility bestow. The small eye of our body discerns the infinitude of space, and the eye of our understanding looks upon many glorious mental worlds. The present life may well be likened to a window whence we look into the future; and we are sure that future—physically, mentally, morally—will be the sum total of all that is good in the past, with other things added. We learn from nature itself, that the course of things is frequently altered; that no two things, nor any one thing in any two moments of time, can be precisely alike; so close, in the extremes so widely distant—"usque adeo quod tangit idem est, tamen ultima distant;" "nature never repeats herself, like a recurring decimal;" yet the modern doctrine concerning continuance of energy warrants our conviction that the unknown is connected with the known, and somewhat like—with other things added. We learn not only from the earthquake and the fire, but from the still small voice. The quiet passages of unobtrusive majesty, the deep, the calm, the perpetual, the sought ere it is seen, and the loved ere it is understood, teach us most. Things which angels work out for us daily, and vary eternally; things

never wanted, never repeated, every one found but once, yet all to be found always. In and through these, we chiefly learn the lessons of trust, of devotion, of heavenly beauty. We do not frame a religious hypothesis to account for them, do not look wholly backward while we argue forward. We use our knowledge to attain, and do attain, certainty that the whole course of nature is a passage to something further: a continuous development into other and higher forms of being, the continuity not being a drear and dead uniformity, but ever and ever intersected by marvellous change. Mrs. Gatty says, in her "Parables from Nature," "After this others went upwards in succession; for the time came to all when the lustrous eyes of the perfect creature shone through the masked face of the grub, and he must needs pass forward towards the fulfilment of his destiny." This, in essence, is miraculous.

The argument is capable of further physical verification:—

We knew long ago that in a vacuum a column of water would ascend to the height of thirty-two feet—not higher. The universe, though it changes every moment in every part, is so wonderfully ordered that, for general mechanical purposes, atmospheric pressure may be regarded as always the same. Torricelli thought about this; took a glass tube, a yard in length, closed at one end, open at the other, and filled it with mercury; then, stopping the open end with his thumb, inverted it in a vessel filled with the liquid metal. He had the joy to find his thought realized in a fact never before revealed to human eyes. Every village pump is a proof of Torricelli's genius; and is proof that chance is ruled

out by some omniscient science, which subordinates every force to a harmony vast and enduring as the universe. The celebrated Pascal took up the fact, and reasoned—If the mercurial column be supported by the atmosphere, the higher we ascend in the air the lower the column will sink as the weight overhead is decreased. He experimented, and the Barometer was discovered. By which we learn that the pressure of all worlds is so delicately and accurately proportioned that it acts with an infinitesimal difference on every particle of air. Kepler, by many observations of planetary motions, ascertained their order, and gave a general expression of them in what are known as "Kepler's Laws." These laws manifest a vast complex intelligible rule, subordinating varying and opposing and coalescing forces to such reasonable end, as demonstrates the universal sway of Intelligence. Our own intelligence, moving in finite sphere, discerns that infinitude is the scene of operations akin, but immeasurably transcending its own. We can retrace the past motions of planets, foresee the future, ascertain the position of stars at any time, and know that even perturbations and anomalies establish the dominion of law. Newton marshalled his thoughts around the grand fact—Gravitation; and virtually, weighed the moon. As a result and verification of all previous thinking, we can, when perturbations are detected in planetary motions, indicate the region where the disturbing influence may be discovered; and the practical astronomer, turning thitherward his telescope, beholds, say, Neptune in the predicted place. We marvellously pass from ignorance, discern "the future in the instant," know the coming place and state

of worlds. The underlying essence of the knowledge is marvellous in its nature, and the germ of something still more wonderful: the science of an infinite Intelligence building, swaying, adorning worlds. Intelligence displaying new vigour every moment in such transcendental physical operations that the forces of the universe, though they centre in every point of space, transcend every finite or measurable circumference. Nor do we yet view the whole: the material world is but a vast outer portico of the Divine magnificence, only the beautiful porch of the infinite Cathedral of God. Spiritual insight, growing with the growth of our mental and moral power, reveals evermore to the eye of sacred genius a pure radiance of inner mysteries, of which the outer world and even Revelation itself are as much a veiling as an unveiling. Highly gifted men, rich in spiritual grace, and of a loving lowly heart, are the only ones who at present enter the light of His secret illumination; but the time is coming when all flesh will behold it and the faithful abide in it for ever. Then the worlds will be read as holy books displaying the works of Divinity.

The materialist, standing outside of things, says, "Laws, so far as science observes, are invariable and continue for ever; there is nothing to indicate that their operation has ever been suspended, or ever been crossed by Divine spontaneous action; or that a state of things at any time existed that could not rigorously be deduced from the preceding state."

The inaccuracy of all such general assertions, professing to formulate everything, may nearly always be seen by a reversal of the assumed facts, thus, "Laws, so far as science observes, are not invariable in their operation,

nor do they continue for ever. There was a time when they began, and when our system passes away they will pass with it. There is nothing, as far as science is concerned, which allows us to say that nature exists at any moment apart from Divine spontaneous action; nor could any former or present existing state of things be rigorously deduced from the preceding state."

We challenge materialists to disprove the statement, and we unhesitatingly pronounce their own dogma unscientific, incapable of proof, and absolutely false. Now for verification of the theologian's argument. It is threefold:—

I. The variability and temporary nature of physical laws.

The variability is proved by the fact that variety in nature is not less striking than uniformity. Take the action of gravity. It varies with the increase of distance, and is at last inappreciable; is continually interfered with, interrupted, and rendered ineffective, by vital and mental action. Not to speak of difference in the weight of bodies to a diver under water, nor of the effect of a strong magnet held over an iron weight in a scale, we know that weight itself alters in the air, while the matter remains, so far as we are aware, unchanged. Suspend a pound from a spring-balance, carry it up some height in the atmosphere, and the indicator will show a lessened weight. From a sufficiently delicate spring-balance suspend a weight and allow it to remain on the table: if we could read the minute indications, we should find that the weight did not remain the same for a single hour. Nevertheless, all the variety is due to a fixed quantity of pressure (possibly never more nor

ever less, except by creative process) which varies with an ever-varying adjustment of universal equilibrium. Of course all the interference producing this change, obtains regulation by the so-called law, or mode, or rule of nature—that means the unknown manner of doing things and of interfering; which manner is so vastly complicate, so universally varied by incalculable interruptions effecting differences varying from inappreciable to the most startling magnitude, that only an Infinite Being can know either the total unity of law, or the incalculable differences centred therein, so as to affirm the one or explain the other.

A man may be seen walking to London, the rate of his speed is calculated, the distance he has to go, and the time is ascertained at which he should arrive. He does arrive at that time, is proved by many witnesses to have maintained one uniform rate of progress, and to have been invariably found in the high-road. All is true, so far as the witnesses are concerned; nevertheless, the man, when not observed, deviated several times; yet, his speed and place on the road were always those, at the times stated, which the witnesses verified.

We shall be told—"The variability is not a change of law, but of its mode of action; and this, its mode of action, varies invariably the same throughout the universe." Then reason thus—We admit the existence of law even where it seems to fail, and we know by various indications that law stretches far out into the unknown. We even grant, for the sake of argument, that at every time, in every place throughout the very limited portion of time and space observed by man, law has prevailed; that every physical event has had a physical cause, and

the same cause has always been followed by the same event. What then? Why, though we admit that physical science, to be practical, must assume and act upon this; when we pass from our buying and selling, from the little to the great, from time to eternity, from space to infinitude, philosophy and religion enlarge our views. We reason after this manner—Take an instance in which an event occurs, and one in which it does not occur: have both instances all the events in common save one which occurs in the former or in the latter as the case may be; and is that one an indispensable part of the factor? If this can be shown in any event, at any moment, we establish, for that event and moment, the universality and invariability of law. It cannot be shown, and precisely the opposite is true: for the state of the universe is never the same in every particular, save one, at any two successive moments; not only so, the universe differs in many particulars in any and every instant; moreover, we know that the same effect is often produced by more than one cause. We have demonstrated by science and philosophy that laws are not invariable.

Laws are not invariable nor do they continue for ever. All the facts of science show that existing laws, if extended to the past and future, remain intelligible for a finite period only. Though the progress of science is continually bringing under law that which seemed lawless, it reveals barriers which can never be surmounted by any higher generalization. Science, for example, can never explain how, apart from Divine interference, the insentient became sentient; the unintelligent became intelligent; and how every natural thing, though in

itself greatly incapable of self-government, is comprehended in some universal rule. Evolution and other theories are useful guides in our researches, but no one of itself, nor all combined suffice for explanation of the system of nature, or for universal application. Present laws indicate a past state of things which is contrary to the present; and from which, so far as is known, they could not have sprung of themselves. When we know most we are conscious of a deeper depth. He who, claiming to be omnipresent and omniscient, presumes to say, "Laws are invariable and continue for ever, nor has their operation ever been suspended or crossed by Divine spontaneous action," is proof that there is nothing too silly and wicked for an unbeliever to say if he has ignorance and audacity enough.

II. The Crossing or Suspension of Law by spontaneous Divine Operation.

It is impossible for physicists to know that law has never for a moment been suspended, and that nature has never been crossed by spontaneous action. They do know, however, that some physical laws are suspended, and others called into action, every time we move our body; laws of matter are interfered with, suspended and elevated by laws of life; and laws of life are crossed, ruled, and enlarged by those of mind. Material phenomena are visible ever-varying manifestations of invisible underlying adapting Energy; vital phenomena are changeable resultants of unseen Life; mental phenomena are the movable garments of unseen Intelligence; there has been, is, and ever will be, a continual moving crossing and changing of things, or nature could not be what it is.

The result obtained by continued process of thought is: that "all phenomena, even the most elevated, are the effects of a complication which has come out of the simplest elements;" and that as the lesser cannot contain the greater, and as the formation of an atom is a mystery great as the moulding of a planet, the advance from matter to life, from life to intelligence, from intelligence to emotion, is a series of steps in connection with some grand teleological design. When we consider the forces of the process working the advance, there is absolutely nothing that enables us to separate any one of the forces and say, "This force is apart from any volition of the Supreme, it is a self-existent necessary force, it is merely mechanical." Indeed, the correlation of all forces in a universe of infinite adaptations; a universe never precisely the same for any two moments, in any atom, or in any point of space; is so wholly opposed to any conceivable system of mechanism apart from Intelligence, and the actual existence of intelligence not self-existent so demands for its origin and cause a self-existent Intelligence, that our greatest and best men adopt the Psalmist's words in that wonderful psalm, which combines, simply yet deeply, the Personality of God with His Infinity—

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea,

the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee" (Ps. cxxxix.).

Further—as change in uniformity can only have been wrought within by power from without, otherwise uniformity were not uniformity, every progression must have been by means of interference which is proved, by the exquisite adaptation of the result, to have been designed from the beginning; therefore, miraculous. The action of God's Spirit sustaining a man is in some analogy with the action of human mind in holding up a hand. Mind dwells and acts in the flesh—not as an attribute, but a ruler; the Most High dwells and acts yet more transcendently in nature.

III. Former and existing states could not rigorously be produced from the preceding state independently of initial external energy.

The proof is very easy.

It is a received axiom of science that no physical power makes its appearance in nature without an equivalent expenditure of some other power. Natural agents are so related as for the most part to be mutually convertible, but no new agency is created. Light runs into heat, heat into electricity, electricity into magnetism, magnetism into mechanical force, and mechanical force back again into heat and light—but not so of necessity; the change is never actually the same, the circumstances alter every moment. There is not, and never was, a perpetual motion in nature: such motion requires a creation of force which science declares nature to be incapable of—nature exists by expense of force. The principle of conversion of force, or energy, is not infinite

—not flowing ever onward in the uninterrupted rhythm of cause and effect, but always lowering and diffusing by that scattering into infinite space which ensures the passing away of the stars. As there is no perpetual motion, the motions now observed are not from everlasting, nor do they possess eternal continuance as to the future, nor could they originate themselves. It is evident, therefore, that not one of the forces of nature could be rigorously produced from any preceding state—apart from the original energy; and as the whole cannot contain more than all its constituent parts, nature past, or present, or future, is not self-sufficing; but referrible, in the whole and every part, to that great Unknown Energy admitted by science to be the Cause of all phenomena, and the Giver of properties to matter.

Bring the argument to a conclusion—

It is a grand thing to behold a noble creature—man, commenting upon, and making discoveries as to nature and providence; finding rational manifestations which awaken his reason to what it did not—what it could not—understand before. Man is a marvellous exception, specially in mind, from everything else in nature. Shakespeare ("Hamlet," Act ii. sc. 2), says, "What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!" He dissects the brains of dead men and of living monkeys, trying to show "how the wits crept in and the wits they crept out," and discovers a grand series of marvels. There are breaks in nature where he expected continuance; and barriers, seeming

impassable, are leaped over. Whether he observes the grub—the caterpillar—the moth—the fœtus —the child —the man—there are leaps and surprises, changes and advances, marvellous and unexplainable: it is not true in every sense—"nihil per saltum facere naturam." Sometimes the process is retarded, sometimes accelerated: for example, if the bird is a metamorphosed lizard, its limbs are a marvellous modification of the lizard's, and its feathers of the lizard's scales. No two men are alike: "Homo homini quid præstat" (Terence, "Eunuch," ii. 2, 1), the differences existing between individuals, apparently similar, are innumerable. No two animals, no two plants—though even to the careful observer they seem the same—are really alike. No two leaves, nor two crystals, nor two elementary atoms even, are exactly equal: the lines, axes, weight, may correspond; nor eye, nor balance, nor microscope, discern unlikeness; yet unlikeness exists. The green herb laughs in the valley, the water sings merrily along the wood, "levis exparte lympha desilit pede," the many-winged and all-searching air garners life as a harvest, and scatters it as a seed, all are pregnant with change, and carry cradled death within every vital form, as an oak banqueteth the destroying worm. The solid earth, all living on it, the deep sea, the firmament, are never for any two consecutive moments the same. A pulse—a rhythm—pervades the universe: every pulse possessing oneness—its own individuality. Natural uniformity is the platform of variety, extracts unlike from like, this is a miracle. Every scientific man knows that by no known forces—laws—processes—could matter be formed out of nothing; nor could force, only capable of pushing on and moving

things in a straight line, assume curves, circles, spirals, and other more complicate movements; nor could the dead give itself life; nor could the unconscious endow itself with intelligence; all is miraculous. If not, then for nature to be nature, we have to endow unliving particles with life when in union with other unliving particles: make the whole contain more than all its constituent parts—which is impossible. We have to charge every atom with intelligent power to pick its way amongst disturbing, and to overcome opposing forces; intelligence to choose this, refuse that, and become, by the coalition and correlation and aggregation of an infinity of minute intelligences, that Supreme Intelligence according to which they all act in the grand teleology of the universe—this is a miracle also. To assume that life, motion, intelligence, are essential properties of matter, is to make matter and nature a wonder great as God.

Miracles are proved: height, depth, length, breadth —past, present, future—all beings, all existences—are stupendous as a whole, and a miracle in every part. Scientific students are bound, by the facts which they meet with in their studies, to accept the miraculous. Those few who, in the fondness of their own self-conceit, take their own poor reason as their souls' only guide, stand on the brink of a dark unfathomable abyss.

> "Reason's glimmering ray
> Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
> But guide us upward to a better day."
>
> DRYDEN.

THOUGHT XIII.

THE UNIVERSE AN EMBODIMENT OF INTELLECT.

"Supposé qu'il n'y eût pas d'être parfait, comment en aurais je crée? mais avec quels éléments et d'après quel modèle?"—EMILE SAISSET.

THE material universe is a complement of intellect. "The universe is the process whereby spirit externalizes itself, or manifests itself in an external world" (Caird's "Kant," p. 427). Emerson, curiously not accurately, expresses it—"Intellect is primary, nature secondary—it is the memory of the mind. That which once existed in intellect, as pure law, has now taken a body as nature. It existed already in the mind in solution; now it has been precipitated, and the bright sediment is the world." Spinoza (by Frederick Pollock, p. 176), unless misunderstood, held—"that nothing exists but thought and its modifications." A remarkable, yet not often used proof is afforded in the fact, that by examination of its laws, and finding their order in matter, in life, in mind, we attain the heights of reason and science. We develop and perfect our understanding by study of nature, because nature is the highest known manifestation of Intelligence—"Mind is the only unit and measure of reality."

The matter of the world may be roughly divided into two sorts: i. atoms and molecules which have already rushed together and satisfied their mutual attractions—these are no longer means of power, as dynamic agents they are passive; ii. atoms and molecules which have not rushed together—their mutual attractions remaining unsatisfied, and those compounds which still possess unexpended forces—these can produce motion, and are the only remaining means of power—a small remnant in comparison with the vast powers already expended.

Nature did not create matter, nor force—whether that already expended, or that remaining and capable of use. Neither the inorganic nor the organic, not plant nor animal, neither one thing nor all things together, can add to nature. Nature, viewed mechanically—materialism asserts that it must be so viewed—is a fire burning itself out. If so, why has it not already burnt out? The past is eternal as the future is eternal: if the past eternity sufficed not for extinction, neither will the future. The mechanical theory does not explain this: the world, on mechanical principles, is not eternal—could not have existed during the whole of the eternal past, any more than it can endure an eternal future—the mechanical principle is inconsistent with the eternity of nature, and does not account for the origin. The fact is—in modern science, "matter is almost reduced to a vehicle for energy" (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 82).

We anticipate an answer to the above statement—"Yours is an amazing logic. You might just as well ask why a fire was not out because it had all day to burn out in: the reply being—it was not lighted till the

afternoon; so the world and all natural events exist in time." The attempted answer concedes that which we contend for: the world does exist in time, is not eternal; consequently, as that which is not, could not of itself begin to be; the mechanical theory proves that the universe is not self-existent, nor self-supporting—it is derivative, it was created.

Nature, not being eternal, was a transition of one state into another; and transition, or change, can only be thought of as by determination of the permanent. If we can experience changes, as we certainly can, we are forced to admit the existence of that without which could be no change. This permanent, or the unchanging, is either the unknown power, or x, of some philosophers; or the personal God of theologians.

Nature, even highly organized, has no creative power. Mental energy, vital force, chemical affinities and antagonisms, atomic and molecular attractions and repulsions, are all reducible to mechanical forces, and these forces are reducible to push-in-a-straight-line. How did push-in-a-straight-line manage to attain, of itself, the angles, curves, circles, spirals, and the other yet more complicated motions represented in nature? A thing with straight line as the foundation, essence, and sum total of its being, must be a straight line for ever. Nature, however, is not a straight line, nor a uniform progression, it is a succession of changing series. The assertion—"laws of nature prove that the phenomena of the past determine all the phenomena in succeeding time," or, as we may phrase it—"the subsequent state of the world is the effect of the preceding state," is only partly true: for by no consistent logic can we extract the

facts of the case from so general a proposition. There may be a fixed relation between the totality of phenomena in one cycle and the totality in another cycle, but that relation cannot be merely mechanical, uniformity and regularity being words and things inapplicable to series: for series are not repetitions, but breaks in uniformity and regularity. A true view of nature regards it not only in the crises and cycles of rise, decline, and fall of suns and systems; but in those innumerable series of changes also by which nature becomes, at least so far as our science extends, different every moment from what it was before, or what it ever will be again. Of a nature thus different as a totality, and in every part; of a nature in which we, as intelligent beings, certainly possess some freedom, and in which possibly higher intelligences are more gifted; no finite mind can infer, by any known process of reasoning, the future from the past. The constitution of our intellect will not allow us to regard the permanent which renders this ceaseless change possible and actual, as an unconscious unintelligent energy; accurate thought requires a conscious intelligence, who, as being self-contained and able to manifest Himself outwardly, is rightly denominated a personal God—"a thinking being who can think infinitely in infinite ways" (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 352).

If matter, the sixty-four elements known, be regarded as the offspring of one primal diffused substance, without parts or properties of any kind; and the ancient maxim be true—"Out of nothing, nothing comes;" matter could not of itself, and out of nothing, give weight, activities, nature, to that which was nature-

less, inert, imponderable, incapable of shape or figure. If matter ever was such a formless diffused substance, there must be a power by which energy, motion, weight, and other attributes, are conveyed. This hypothesis opposes the scientific dogma that matter is indestructible and eternal. For if matter can be so shorn of its attributes that it ceases to be that which we know of matter, why may not the process be continued to its annihilation? Think it out thus—Thought, rather the power of thought, may diminish in amount of being till it ceases to be known as thought. A sensation, too, can change its intensive and extensive quantity, be weaker or stronger. Are we not then bound to admit that thought, which is not known as thought, cannot properly be said to exist at all? If there is consciousness, but we are not conscious of it; and thought without the I, whose collective unity makes it personally possible; can we not go a little further and arrive at that stage in which for us, as thinking beings, they are nothing? Admitted, that matter is indestructible by any power in man or in nature; that, do what we will, two attributes of matter (the relation to moving force, and the power of attracting and being attracted by other matter) are always the same; do the two permanent properties constitute the essence of matter? Certainly not: they are merely relations between matter and something else. Then, if we ask—"What is matter?" the reply comes—"No matter at all." The permanent substance is something besides and independent of our conscious states; something, probably the genus, of which matter may be one species. Hence, as we believe that there is real substantial existence, life,

energy, intelligence, independent of all phenomena; it seems right on scientific and philosophical principles to maintain that the matter, the energy, the life, the intelligence of the universe, are the externalization of eternal substance, energy, life, intelligence; or, as Frederick Pollock states, p. 108, Spinoza meant—"The modes or creatures which immediately depend on God, or are created by Him" are "motions in matter, and understanding in the thinking thing."

We will put nature, as it now exists, into the witness-box:—

We find formative power everywhere. Molecules attract and repel one another, at certain points or poles, and in definite directions. These forms and directions are complex, and the complexity partly explains the differences of crystalline and all other structures. The architecture of a living grain of corn somewhat resembles, but is infinitely more complex than, the architecture of a crystal. The crystal adds to its surface in order to increase in size. Blocks of crystal deposit themselves, and we have little pyramids with terrace above terrace from base to apex; the operation seems not wholly mechanical, but as if an invisible population under an unseen master, gave position to the atomic blocks. The architecture of the plant exceeds the architecture of the crystal. The plant, as regards the cells, makes increase within; and forces are active at the root, the stalk, the ear, the full corn in the ear. By far more subtle remote formative acts, including chemical vital mental expenditure, are animal organisms constructed. This wonderful result is an externalization of permanent energy and intelligence, and we rightly use

the words of S. Augustine, "It is not with the world as with an edifice; which, once raised, continues to stand, though the architect does no more to it. If God ceased to govern the world, it would not continue to exist for a single instant: Divine Providence is a daily creation" ("Commentary on Genesis").

Of the inner quality or qualities enabling matter thus to attract matter, move, form crystals, effect growth, manifest intelligence, we know nothing more than the results. The various manifestations are called by different names, but the same energy which pulls an apple from the tree, holds together all worlds, "moulds a planet and rounds a tear." A modification of this power, in connection with energies, subtle, vital, intellectual, constructs the plant and builds the animal; is the source of our emotions, the means by which we think, and reveals our thought and emotion. We endeavour to know the mystery by deepest, furthest-reaching investigation, but within every depth is a greater deep; and by no possible means can the most intellectual divine, or the profoundest physicist, state where the material ends or the spiritual begins. We have to do with a vast machinery composed of inert senseless, extended, solid, movable substance, existing without a mind, or reason, of its own; a machinery within which are sensational, emotional, and other processes, too subtle to be apprehended by sense, or fully represented by imagination. This machinery, associated by various laws in various groups, is framed of solid, liquid, gaseous bodies, and located in space. From among the infinite number of these, one of special importance to himself, his own organism, is allotted to

every man. The peculiarity of which is that it becomes the channel of communication between the material world and himself as a thinking being. His intelligence so constructed, is instructed and moulded by the definite order of the universe. He learns the nature and constitution of that order, makes it his business to order himself by it, fashion his life, and arrange his destiny. Thus human mind is a finite expression of definite order in the universe: a microcosm, and the world a macrocosm, of the Supreme Intelligence.

Could we see, as Newton thought might some time be possible, the ultimate atoms, and do as the alchymist in "Hudibras"—

> "He had first matter seen undressed;
> And took her naked all alone
> Before one rag of form was on;"

or were we able to behold the waves of light æther, know their size, form, force; trace atom to molecule; find latent in the amorphous drop of water all the marvels of crystalline force; examine the breaking up by the sunbeam of the carbonic acid of the atmosphere within the plant into elements of growth; and see the same dynamic power brought differently into display for construction and repair of animal bodies; these outward and inner visible phenomena would be but counters of the intellect—not revealers of the mystery. They would demonstrate the interdependence and harmony of all things; but we could not detect nor precisely explain the essential difference between volitional and mechanical operation; for the whole world, even where it seems dead, is like a living creature praising God.

Atoms and molecules march in tune ; melodious strains awake in crystalline force ; the pitch is changed for that symphony in which the trees clap their hands ; then come a blending and variety, richer and higher, in cattle of the thousand hills, culminating in the grand oratorio and outpoured praise of men. These conceptions, or several sets of experiences, of something real that transcends consciousness, yet comes within our consciousness ; of something absolutely independent of us, yet of which we are made a part ; of something, amidst changing circumstances, itself unchanging, living, intelligent ; lead the devout philosophic mind to believe in a Creator who constructs our minds so that we may believe in Him as that Wonderful, in comparison with whose wisdom all the splendour of worlds is but a sparklet of intelligence. A merely secular technical man does not accept this guidance. Though there is not a single particle of matter which he can either conceive or picture as it really exists ; and to know the Cause and essence of nature he must, by means of nature, go beyond nature ; he adopts, instead of a Creator, that senseless notion of some self-devised process by which right-thinking intelligences tend to multiply and wrong-thinking to die out. It will confirm the philosophic mind in devotion, and serve to raise the secular man, if we indicate a mode of thought in which, by means of successive reaches, we obtain glimpse of a Being who, separate from ourselves, is yet the cause of all those states and changes of which we are conscious ; glimpse of Him who, in essence unknowable, becomes knowable by entering, through creation, into determinate relations with the known and the knowable.

Theorem—*The Intellectual Consciousness of our own Existence proves the Existence of God.*

I am conscious of my own existence as determined in time. My intellectual consciousness in time is by a series of mental states—is movable. All movable consciousness determined in time presupposes something permanent: for the experience of a succession of things in time is impossible, except in relation to something permanent.* This permanent something cannot be myself, for the reason that my own consciousness is not permanent and is itself determined by that something. It follows that my consciousness of this permanent something is only possible through existence of a reality external to me; and, therefore, the determination of my intellectual consciousness in time is by that real permanent existence which is external to me—the Infinite; of infinite attributes every one of which expresses eternal and infinite Being.

He who refuses this argument, will have to deny that similar argument, by which alone, from the determined consciousness of our own existence, we are able philosophically to prove the existence of external objects in space.

We shape the Thought otherwise:—

Let a man observe himself; he feels as well as moves,

* A rough and ready way by which those not versed in philosophical thought may apprehend that the experience of a succession in time is not possible except in relation to something permanent; that is, change is not conceivable unless we perceive at the same time something which does not change; will be found by observing that the flight of a bird is perceived because in contrast with the apparent fixity of the earth and sky; and that we are conscious of our own motion, only as we are aware of comparative fixity in the things around.

thinks as well as feels, is morally and intellectually conscious. He cannot wholly separate the moral and emotional from the intellectual, the sentient from the mere living, nor the living from the mechanical, when, gradationally, he descends to the inorganic. There is no vast chasm anywhere: one and the same power, one and the same principle, are externalized throughout, and inextricably interwoven; but differing in the masses and complexity manifested, in the nature and essence of the processes involved. Now as it is certain that no one thing in the world makes itself, that every part is for the whole, and that the whole is not more than the sum total of all the parts, the whole did not make itself, is not a self-creating machine, but previously existed in Intellect, and became Nature when endowed with material existence and shape. The universe is Mind externalized. Mind rules matter. We live, move, have all our being, in God. "As for the suggestion that the perception of the understanding in this respect may be illusory, in other words, that the reality of things is unknowable, it is one which Spinoza was incapable of entertaining: it is wholly foreign to his thought, and I submit that it ought so to be to all sound thinking" (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 163).

Take the other side of this truth:—

Suppose we gather, first-hand from nature, the molecules of the human body—not so as to replace or renew a pre-existent form, but to make a new being. By structural energies we gather the mass with its forces and put them together in the same positions as those occupied by a human body, there being "the self-same forces and distribution of forces, the self-same motions

and distribution of motions, would this organized concourse of molecules stand before us as a sentient thinking being?" Science answers—"There seems no valid reason to believe that it would not." Thus we attain to man. In this man, so gathered, the peculiar structural energies are not an inseparable part of the elements—but a something added by the vital principle, nor are the movements of an organism the sum total of material activities—but an alteration and extension; nor is the thinking inseparable from molecular motion—but a something apart from them acting with them; this something added, this alteration and extension, this something apart yet with, not being the product of any part, or of the whole of the man, but manifestly that which makes him, and endows him with individual speciality, as an externalization of Might, Life, Intelligence. The active and understanding mind is a mode of thought which, in a sense, is part of the infinite Intellect—but is not lost in that Intellect. Man is the complement, the symbol, of the world's intellectual constructive process. Man is able to give his own plan—power—spirit—to that which he forms; is an analogy, very feeble, yet true and actual, "εἰκῶν τοῦ νοητοῦ αἰσθητός" (Plato, "Tim.")—or there is no human analogy—of Him who organizes, gives life and intelligence to the world. Spinoza (by Frederick Pollock, p. 286) says, "Clear and distinct understanding of one's own nature . . . is accompanied by the idea of God."

Life and intelligence do not pass away, they are for ever and ever. The world, though it changes continually in every part, is relatively eternal, that is, it began time; there was no time without the world—in the

beginning it was created by the Absolutely Eternal. There is in it, unfailing and universal subordination of parts to grand principles of law. Law is not the product of any part, or of the whole of the parts, but a manifestation of the all-pervading principle. This enables us to see how the notion of Fate arose ; and, while it gives consistency to the Scriptural Plan of Redemption, admits and requires that the many separate worlds of infinitude be in unity with some all-embracing scheme. For the maintenance of this unity, exists that continual intervention and interaction which weld all the links into one grand chain of universal cause and effect. Evidence is afforded by astronomy. The systems of suns, planets, satellites, comets, meteors ; elliptic, parabolic, and other planes of motion ; of sun round sun, and centres dominated by other centres ; are examples of union, communion and intervention, passage of energy, light, heat, motion, which show that the universe is as to the whole and every part, the complement of Intellect—science assumes that to exist and be intelligible are both one. The telescope reveals stars in which life, such as we are acquainted with, may have existed, but now has no place. There are other spheres in which life is affirmed not now to exist, but time may bring it. Life is both the result and cause of new interferences, and the volition of animal life is transformed, in the human organism, to reason and conscience. These interferences, whether sudden and startling, or with beginning and operation imperceptible, are means, unfoldings, displays of wonderful, ever-growing variety. In distant realms of space stars die and new worlds brighten. As the old pass away, new life brings in its own power, its own beauty. What we call

death is but the abandonment of home for another home. What we call eternity is for ever a transition from life to more life. Our spirit when it sinks into apparent darkness and the deep, emerges to new destinies in regions unvisited before. O Art and Science, range through all space, clasp together extremes, shake the rich from idle lethargy, awake our senators to send knowledge where the teacher is dumb and men of untutored reason herd! O Intellect, go forth to all the world, take Goodness for companion, bid high and low to carry the rapt vision of suffering virtue, through the doors of the shadow of death, into His presence who binds the sweet influence of the Pleiades and looses the bands of Orion; who demands eternity for the progress of His creatures and the vindication of His holiness!

THOUGHT XIV.

AUTOMATISM OF NATURE.

"Through some awkwardness on my part, I touched a wire leading from the battery, and the discharge went through my body. Life was absolutely blotted out for a very sensible interval, without a trace of pain. In a second or so consciousness returned . . . The appearance which my body presented to myself was that of a number of separate pieces. The arms, for example, were detached from the trunk, and seemed suspended in the air."—JOHN TYNDALL.

THE occurrence, mentioned by Professor Tyndall, proves that the human body is capable of very remarkable changes, so unlike its ordinary condition, as to resemble a blotting out of life. By automatic action on the part of nature the whole frame can pass from a state of consciousness to another resembling death. Though natural, this seems akin to the supernatural. We do not identify miracles with occurrences such as Tyndall mentions, yet both resemble each other as the outward manifestation of an inner unseen operation. Somnambulism affords another illustration of the same kind. Though the body sleeps, the inner self is partially awake. There is, so to speak, a resurrection of the spirit within the body dead in sleep. In other cases, where there is a total loss of memory, the body seems to die before it becomes a corpse.

Between the verification of any one miracle, and a verification of miracles generally, there is a great difference. As parts of a great plan, miracles are probable, reasonable, natural. The historical evidential proof of miracles generally, and of many individually, is greater than can be given as to the life and actions of Julius Cæsar. Take away miracles, and the very life, laws, customs, and national monuments of the Jewish people are unexplainable. The scientific argument is stronger than the historical, stronger even than that derived from our own eyesight of any one marvel: for in one, mistake is possible. A miracle, like the translation of Elijah, or the resurrection of Lazarus, or prophecy like the foresight of Isaiah, occurring—say once in every two centuries, could possibly be explained by an unknown law of intermittent exercise, which endowed one human being with levitation, another with the faculty of suspending and restoring consciousness, and endued high intellect with remarkable power of prevision. Not so when we scientifically regard miracles, in the whole, as sign manuals from Infinite Wisdom of a process by which men are led to happiness by way of holiness; as divine seals to a revelation of doctrines, precepts, promises, by which, through sanctification of the inner world of spirit, the outer world of matter is to be freed from evil and made resplendent in virtue.

The question of miracles, at its first presentation, appears to some thinkers much as the heavens do to those who are not familiar with astronomy. Our first thought, as we look at the sky, is—the stars are sprinkled by confusion. The next thought is as to the vastness of

space and manifoldness of worlds. After examination and reflection, our reason discovers an arrangement—"Quem κοσμον Græci nomine ornamenti appellavere eum nos a perfecta elegantiaque absoluta mundum" (Pliny)—an intelligible plan, motions and forces which can be calculated, events which may be predicted, harmonious interaction, subordination and compensation, which by means of constant change and variety ensure permanence and comprehensive unity.

That is not all. Mr. J. S. Mill ("Logic," B. 3, c. xxi. § 1) states—There is "no difficulty in conceiving that in some one of the many firmaments into which sidereal astronomy now divides the universe, events may succeed one another at random without any fixed law. Nor can anything in our experience, or in our mental nature, constitute a sufficient, or indeed any reason, for believing that this is nowhere the case." He is right: in some regions things possibly go at random—chaos may prevail, of which the dreams of the feverish are a sort of sample. "Modern geometers have shown that such differences are perfectly conceivable, and that an indefinite number of consistent geometrical systems may be framed with axioms contradicting in various ways those of Euclid: and this in the range of three dimensions, without any reference to the more knotty question whether space of more than three dimensions is conceivable or not" (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 174). The apparent local permanence which we find is not necessarily universal, not a fated but a reasonable limited fixity, such as our understanding approves, connected with that living growth and advance which makes the world seem self-contained; and, though

greatly automatic in government, not press as a yoke of resistless destiny on our common lot, causing the iron to enter our soul, but manifesting a generous purpose of some inward presence, moving life to a hidden music—"a melody that's sweetly pitched in tune."

For living things to have the faculty of life in themselves, seed in themselves, for kind to bring forth after their kind, is a wonderful automatism! There are strange manifestations of it: a spontaneousness in plants by which distant parts are suppressed, or over-developed; bones of animals are lengthened or shortened, strengthened or lightened, straightened or bent, to suit particular functions and habits. So far is this carried that, little by little, everything seems working towards some good in the way it is best fit for, and adapting itself to even the least of surrounding things. New species are formed; and sometimes, at a leap, as by a burst of freedom, wonderful life and unusual powers enter and manifest themselves.

We do not think much of the luminosity induced in many substances by mechanical or chemical action; nor of those vivid illuminations which disappear so soon as the source ceases to be in the presence of the illuminated object, though sufficiently remarkable. Vessels containing sea-water, crowded with luminous animals, may be so placed that their illuminations put together, and reflected upon different parts of the room, make it seem on fire. The strangeness is, that irrational creatures seem to have a power of choice, as if capable of purpose. Noctiluca—a flagellata infusorian, many medusæ, the shell-fish Pholas, numbers of better known marine things, are remarkable for luminosity. The wonders grow when

we come to other living things. Though the mode of producing light is nearly unknown, we are sure that the will of the animal plays a peculiar part—actually calling into existence, using, controlling for its own purposes, many and various natural powers. The luminosity of the glow-worm and of the fire-fly, and of their bodies—even when the head has been removed, and of their ova, is by automatic kindling of their own lights. Such automatous use of power within and without; the interference, not constant but intermittent, is not an accident; not a power exercised in a void, and in relation to nothing; not a tendency tending from that which has no existence; but a light kindled from the depths of a deeper spontaneity to lead the profoundly rational to new discoveries and cognitions as to nature having life in itself by a sort of freedom—not by fate. The most meagre existences are in sure alliance with the unseen but supreme rule of a world in which their own visible part is small.

Many invertebrates cast off limbs and grow new ones, *e.g.* Star-fish, and Brittle Stars in impure water: the casting off is automatic and wilful, according to the case. Birds, when robbed of their eggs, lay again and again that they may ensure a progeny. Animals shape their conduct so as to use means for attainment of an end. That continual, varying, advancing, or retrograding evolution, in which not only the need but the will of animals counts for something, is evidence of interference and intervention—by which the whole of nature fashions a part, and a part makes use of the whole. We recognize in nature an unconscious activity of reason—not yet reason, we trace it in crystals, in sensitive plants, in sea-

anemones, in the artistic impulses of animals, the highest embodiment of it in human nature we designate genius. Every little likeness of it, we count a miniature drawn by a Master Hand, a lesson in signs about new beginnings, new revelations, new possibilities. The science and philosophy are the truth seen in nature, even as our religion is truth seen in God. From the truth in nature we ascend to truth in God: both are one. It is true that the existence of design does not necessarily prove the coexistence of will: for the crystal builds itself into particular shape in obedience to the latent forces in the surrounding medium. At low temperature one shape, at high temperature another. An acid, under one set of conditions, selects a particular base; under other conditions, a different. Nevertheless, the energy converted into various forces and forms, little by little, is dissipated. Whenever energy is converted into force, or force is transformed, there is always more or less power turned into heat; this heat becoming uniformly distributed is rendered unavailable for further production of power. No known natural process is exactly and completely reversible, nor can it be reconverted into the same original amount of the primitive energy. This proves, so far as science extends, that the general principle of activity in nature, its automatism, its endeavour to persist in its own being, is nothing else than being what it is, in subordination to something outside of it, the whole is derived—is of God: "for of everything soever there is necessarily in God an idea, whereof God is the cause." Hence it appears, that we can understand no part of nature without at the same time increasing our knowledge of the first cause, or God (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 194).

The magic visions playing in these revelations of power without and within, of automatism and consciousness, are rightly accounted determining and enlightening factors in our knowledge of creation: for says Humboldt, "The highest and most important result of the investigation of physical phenomena, is the knowledge of the connection of the forces of nature, the deep sense of their mixed dependence." The plastic, or consummating, or automatic completing principle, makes the universe, in very deed, not chaos but creation—an orderly system—having Mind for the primal original Being and Existence—"*πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ, εἶτα Νοῦς ἐλθὼν αὐτὰ διεκόσμησε.*" Mind manifested in the spontaneity of kind after its kind; Mind bringing together all nature in a chain of various links, every one united by indissoluble affinity; Mind evidenced in that continuance of automatism which makes way for itself, as out of a dark womb. This rhythm of activity, of progress, of vitality, of reason, never ceases—though the manifestations are intermittent. The qualities of this rhythm give the powers, or modulate the powers, of the principal and mother elements whereof all things in this lower world are composed. Its principles frame the arch erected over our heads, so that it is neither loosed nor dissolved; nor can the celestial spheres forget their wonted sway, nor by irregular volition turn themselves out of course. It governs the greater and lesser rulers, and all the lights of heaven; nor do they shine, or rest, or stand, without their fellows. Times and seasons are not blended by confused and disordered mixture; but as the winds breathe, and clouds yield rain, the fruits of the earth are nourished on the breasts of their mother.

Thus the automatism, the unconscious activity of nature, is by a Heavenly Influence within, continually becoming natural, ascending to vitality, intelligence, emotion, ruling all things. It is a vast rhythm felt in the ocean swell; heard in all harmonies; seen in every alternation of light, shade, colour; known in poetic swell and cadence; animating the throb of all life; moving and acting in all existence. The thought is superior to all expression, even as profound sentiment is mostly silent. The reality corresponds to something in ourselves—which, though mysteriously incomprehensible, we yet apprehend. A Something that the intensity and ardour of our thoughts and passions find no words, commensurate with their intelligence and sensibility, adequately to express.

We may, however, say—Formative power accompanies matter and constitutes the indwelling essence of things. It is not an afterthought, with new use and purpose, but present in the very beginning, with a potentiality in every germ of the whole that is to be. The thing itself explains itself. To know the thing is to perceive its reason, and the intelligible providence explains the perpetual activity, ever re-creating it, ever in process of self-differentiation, of self-integration. Our view extended, far as possible, to the world reveals one vast consistent system, infused with lucidity of reason, working with self-revolving, self-realizing idea. The lowest order of existences advance ever and ever, so unconsciously prophesying that only in the highest can the meaning of all be seen. The Intelligence is not an arbitrary agency filling the chasms between different isolated capacities; as were creation, contrivance, sus-

tenance, incomplete parts seeking their complements; but the inward life beginning and moving on in continuous conditioning process to a self-determined end: the whole fully intelligible by Divine thought. Only in the light of Divine Idea can we see the purpose or end of nature and man.

The unseen roots of visible existence are not discoverable by mental digging into the depths whence they issue. How deep the depths, and inscrutable the mysteries, we may thus picture:—Imagine the seeds underground conversing as to the manner of their future existence, agreeing that their size and weight will surely be increased, that they shall imbibe more moisture, lay fold on fold by continual swelling. Alike dark and earthly are we when we limit natural or supernatural operations, and are weakly satisfied that our underground cogitations contain all the truth. The voice of nature in its continual becoming, in its automatism, in the texture of our own thoughts as to goodness, of our feelings as to righteousness, tells of that wisdom which the Lord possessed "in the beginning of His way, before His works of old" (Prov. viii. 22). We are worse than silly, if we place the power of design and of mutual adaptation in the atoms for use, as by universal suffrage, and refuse it to Intelligence and Might outside of them.

We have taken the word "automatism," derived from two Greek words, in the ancient meaning "self-moving." Of late some scientific men have departed from the sense it conveyed to Greek thinkers—a cause of movement and action. Dr. Carpenter says of an automaton, "it means a structure which moves by a mechanism and which can only move in a certain way." Such a

machine—say a watch—is not, in the sense of the Greek word, an automaton at all. Certainly, as applied to Nature and living creatures, it were better to retain the ancient signification, involving either complete or partial freedom of willing and acting, or the absence, more or less, of external agency. So Homer uses the word poetically—"*αὐτόμαται δὲ πύλαι μύκον οὐρανοῦ*" ("Iliad," E., 549); and "*ἀπὸ ταυτομάτου*" (Herod., ii. 66)—means naturally. Fancy a game of chess in which all the chessmen have wills and ways of their own, more or less small and cunning. The chiefer pieces do not run hither and thither quite as they would, for they are a little uncertain about adversaries' moves; and the meaner make up by number that which they lack in power. Castling, by a sort of violence, often disgusts the bishops; knights shuffle on to new squares; and pawns, wheedled out of their places, try to agree by contrived disorder to make away from their appointed posts that there may be checkmate on a sudden. What a game is this when enlarged to Nature's play! Who can understand it all? The longest-headed unbeliever, who arrogantly trusts in his own mathematically imagined scheme, and treats the little impassioned creatures with contempt, as if they had no secret of their own, is sure to be beaten. The truly wise man, discerning minute masteries everywhere, tries to comprehend what it is that sways the little wills of the many small; and to discern, even though it be from afar, what is the Mind of the Great Will that can afford a will to everything—but amid all the freedom, and without coercion in any part, preserve universal fealty.

The automatism of nature is natural, yet supernatural.

We may call it "Nature's gift of tongues," and thus translate the speech :—Do not think that God is present only in startling acts, unexpected occurrences, wonderful agencies. He supports the millions with bread, refreshes them with water from the spring, brings the meridian sun, the cloud, the night, makes known His will and law in all things. Be not wilderness-men, unmindful of the miracle of bread because it is a life-long gift; nor count the water less beneficent for flowing through the desert; nor deem that the cloud by day and the fire by night are less than pillars of God on account of their continuance. Let not the frequency of the gift, and the regularity of coming, cause you to forget God—the Giver. You cannot determine the precise kind, manner, time, of divine action; nor always separate it from that of nature, but whatever good nature gives He imparts. He is distinct from nature—controlling it, above nature—ruling it. You, yourselves, are voluntary mirrors to reflect His light; as rays from Him, the Source of light; and, in the purity of moral life and action, are His forces. Let not the light become darkness, nor neglected strength be your weakness. Remember the automatism of nature. For you it rises to rational and moral freedom in that part of the finite which is given for your possession by God who is absolutely free in the infinite. Present cosmical ordinances are by skilful prearrangements, and healing remedies exist by means of providence and government—acting rather by spontaneity from within than by coercion from without.

> "Nullis hominum cogentibus ipsæ
> Sponte sua veniunt."
>
> VIRGIL, *Georg.* ii. 10.

Miracles are not to correct blunders, not breakages of laws, not repairs of imperfect machinery, but by a free divine redemptive volition and act to meet, restrain, instruct, the freedom of intelligent creatures, and to establish special relations between man and his Maker.

THOUGHT XV.

SYMBOLS OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

"That which is spiritual clothes itself with what is natural, as a man clothes himself with a garment."—ANON.

". . . What if all animated natures
Be but organic harps, diversely framed,
That tremble into life as o'er them sweeps
. . . our intellectual breeze?"

IF our Thought of Nature's automatism and spontaneity, as the evidence of unconscious reason dwelling in every part, and attaining highest form in the sentient and intellectual life of man, be correct; automatism is Nature's work-day dress; miracles are that speciality of attire which Nature assumes when conscious of her Lord's nearer presence. At the marriage feast in Cana, modest water blushed when she saw her God—"Lympha pudica Deum vidit et erubuit." In pursuing our inquiry, we may probably find likenesses in nature of supernatural things, hieroglyphical characters to be read by the light of reason.

Space is not finite: wherever we erect a boundary, we begin again to think of space beyond that boundary; thus, by continual dissolving of limits, we endeavour to form a less inadequate idea of infinitude—though every idea is inadequate.

Space is occupied in every part, to which our observation extends, by an all-pervading subtle medium, called æther, through which, or by means of which, acts the energy of gravity welding the universe together: so we enlarge our thought to attain conception, not comprehension, of omnipresence.

That all matter may not rush into one mass, the all-piercing attraction is counterbalanced by an all-pervading repulsion. By due adjustment of these opposing forces, we have not only the many starry worlds, but the separate individuality of every atom and molecule in the universe, with endowment—not of mechanical equality or equilibrium, but of varying and opposing energies, densities and figures, in connection with life, intelligence, emotion. By persistent, ever-enlarging reflections concerning these marvellous energies at work in space and matter, we obtain symbols of omnipotent operations.

In our Thought, as to Cosmical and Mental Analogies, we found a correspondence between natural and spiritual things; in our present conception, we obtain from space some notion of Infinitude; from æther an idea of Omnipresence; and by the vast energies at work on matter, in the æther, through space, a thought as to Omnipotence and Omniscience. It is hard to say whether our first thought of Infinitude, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Omniscience, is vague, or abstract, or concrete. Certainly our own individuality and personality, possessed with a sense of responsibility, quickly lead to the conviction that personality is the highest mode of existence; and as we are able to act on matter, project force through space, be present by means of

thought and sight where our bodies are not, and know things before they come to pass, we soon attain ideas as to the existence of an Infinite, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient Person, the Cause of all, to whom we are responsible.

Our consciousness of life, of physical and mental power, leads to that activity which ever seeks enlargement, continually aims at progress. Then, whether we have an idea of creation—as a going forth and manifestation of Divinity; or of a process by which Nature seeks, so to speak, to return to God—in order to possess Him more fully; we certainly strive for enlargement—as to ourselves, and soon discover symbols and capacities which portray that enlargement. Wherever we find a rigid envelope, means of liberty are sure to be at hand; amidst weakness, strength will spring; in the very expectation of death is some manifestation of life; so that we may invert the familiar words, and say, "In the midst of death we are in life." Iron is strong, water is weak;

> "Quid magis est durum saxo, quid mollius unda?
> Dura tamen molli saxa cavantur aqua;"
>
> OVID.

encircle the water tightly on every side with an inflexible iron shell: the water, in crystallizing, will shiver the iron rim to pieces; it was enclosed as in a tomb, but it comes forth in lively liberty to run a new race. These are natural facts which represent a creation striving to be free from bondage, and to press into that which Scripture calls "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. viii. 21).

Everything in nature taken by itself, apart from all other things, is unnatural; nor can any account or

reason be given of it; but all things, viewed together, form that vast intelligible creation which our intellect endeavours to comprehend, and our science to explain. In like manner, our Christian Faith, Miracles, Revelations, viewed apart from collateral realities and truths, seem inexplicable and incomprehensible; but observed as a whole, as explanatory of the world, as indicative of an account which we have to render, as remedial of evil, as manifestations of future blessedness, they correct and enlarge the materialist's crude conception of physical creation into the Christian man's grand idea of a glorious world-wide cathedral replenished with myriads of beings, every one, in its own way, bringing honour to God, every good thing passing from glory to glory.

The germs of life are all similar, whether of Newton, or his dog Diamond; of the great whale, or tiny moss. First invisible, always mysterious, and in their early visible stages without structure or characteristic difference. Out of that invisibility or nothingness as to difference, God raises manifold life, marvellous intelligence, sacred emotion, glorious beings, with everlasting splendour for destiny. In every even the poorest, weakest, meanest thing, is that potentiality which the Almighty miraculously energizes.

Diverse as are the invisible conditions which separate the delicate Bacterium from the intangible virus of a deadly fever, not less mysterious are the Divine potentialities separating the spiritual from a carnal state, the converted man from the unconverted. The spiritual goes on from life to more life, the carnal passes from a life in present death to a death in future life.

The organic cell out of which the physical qualities

and mental peculiarities of ancestors reappear in their descendants, so that the diseases and madness of men long dead have resurrection in the living, opens hidden recesses in nature to warn us how a whole eternity of future existence may be marred by means of evil in our present being. Two cells are alike to human eye, and the microscope reveals no inequality, yet one contains the life of S. John, beloved of Christ; the other of Judas, who became a devil (John vi. 70).

We endeavour to spell these words from the mysterious language of evil. Evil must be traced further back than the radical defect in human germ, and the good be seen to possess an earlier origin than the substance vainly scanned by the microscopic eye. The good is of God, evil is deprivation of God. We cannot think that the primal germ, or all in all of corruption, was in Adam, though he was the first man; nor in God, who was wholly and perfectly Good. Evil is the malignant thing, darkling in every superstition; that intensely subtle mischief which seems woven, by a spirit skilled in wickedness, into every past and present civilization, for the degradation of life in every clime. It fashions devils for the superstitions of China, India, Japan; and it suggests to men, living in Christian countries, to make, for the sake of gain, idols for these heathens to worship. It lies at the root of Hebrew and Christian corruption, hurts nature, distorts providential events, makes present and prepares future misery. Good, on the other hand, is manifested in ameliorative advance by Natural Selection; developed in high art, science, civilization; inculcated by Holy Scripture; it purifies, preserves, and advances life on the Earth. Good is

that which a true spirit strives after, in the conviction of Righteousness, of Divinity, by whom we possess immortality. Good and evil, flesh and spirit, are contrary one to the other. Man must be born—a natural miracle, and born again by the Holy Ghost—a supernatural miracle. By this latter, the new birth, he lives a new life in the old flesh; and anticipates that final Resurrection when the whole man will eternally possess life in a new and heavenly sphere.

Those who believe in the development of human language and intellect from brute cries and instinct, ought not to be slow in believing the lesser though quicker miracles of speech recorded in Holy Scripture. If human speech is a natural and normal development from brute cries, the language and wisdom imparted in Scripture to irrational and speechless creatures are not wholly unnatural and abnormal. The acceleration and elevation of the physical and mental process are a small matter. The wonderment of the miracle, indeed, is well-nigh removed by redundant greatness of the fact; that creatures nearest and likest men are not gifted with language. Those whose organs, the parrot for example, place them far away, whose capacity science designates incapacity, sometimes obtain special and startling employment. Moreover, there is nothing in the organs of the serpent and of the ass that renders them absolutely incapable of producing speech intelligible as that of the parrot—which is unintellectual as to meaning, and of metallic sound somewhat resembling the phonograph. In a world full of forms of life, activity and energies not yet half known, are many marvels; and by these the prodigies of Eden, the sights of seers,

the inspiration of prophets, the acts of heroes, may be in part illustrated though not explained.

In the three great characteristic natural history provinces, New Zealand, Australia, South America, the present state of things was foreshadowed by the past. There was the same kind of country; but, sometimes larger, more fertile, moister. The extinct and the living fauna and flora show that the same general shapes of animals and plants were represented in the same province throughout vast periods of time. This cannot be by accident, continuance of likeness amidst perpetual change, change adding the charms of novelty to that which was essentially the same, are proof that headlong forces and fortuitous combinations were not the authors; but that numberless collocations and adaptations fitted animals and plants to their place, and fitted the place to their state. "This green flowery rock-built earth, the trees, the mountains, the rivers, many-sounding seas; that deep sea of azure which swims overhead; the winds sweeping through it, the black cloud fashioning itself together, now pouring out fire, now hail and rain; all these are, ay, what? We do not know. At bottom can never know at all. They are, after every effort of our science, wonderful! magical! inscrutable! to whomsoever thinks about them. It is by not thinking that we cease to wonder."

We account it high genius and truth in the poet who through every star, through every blade of grass, makes visible the glory of God.

> "A permeating fervid Power
> By all things felt, but seen by none,
> That kindles up the fiery sun,
> And animates the wayside flower."
>
> JOHN STAFFORD SPENCER, *Dips into Nature* (1872).

We reckon it a proof of artistic nature in the painter to behold a beauty divine in everything; but there is more truthfulness, higher genius, deeper poetry, in devout men. They open in every object a window through which to behold Infinitude. They live resolutely in the whole, the beautiful, the good. They recognize in the Almighty capacities and influences mightier than those which eclipse the sun, than those which roll the river St. Lawrence over the Falls of Niagara. These men pray, knowing that He has been pleased to endue their spiritual faculties with inward energy. They endeavour so to order their life, that every work may be begun, continued, and ended in God; that the rain-drop in the sky, the beam from the sun, adversity and prosperity, life and death, every direction, degree, and exigence of nature, may be recognized, by their loving faithful spirit, as under the guidance of Him whose Love and Wisdom and Power are Infinite. "The weather, now stormy, now serene, may be likened to a tone on some grand organ. Are not the laws of sound just as fixed as the laws of weather? and yet may you not ask the organist to change the tune that he is playing? The weather, like the tune, depends not only on certain forces, but also on the arrangement. The forces remain true to their laws, but their arrangement depends on the will of some person; and to the will of a Divine Person you address yourself in prayer. So you may go on praying—'Give us this day our daily bread'" (J. P. Norris, Canon of Bristol, "Catechist's Manual").

Now work a wonder as symbol of a miracle:—

Take a piece of clean glass, and pour over it a little water in which a crystal has been dissolved. By means

of a microscope and a lamp, throw an image of the plate of glass upon a screen. The beam of the lamp illuminates the glass, heats it, causes evaporation. When the solution has become super-saturated, splendid branches of crystal shoot out over the screen, and will cover a dozen square feet of the surface with beautiful forms. With another solution, you obtain crystalline spears, other spears feather them right and left, and from various nuclei in the field of view spears shoot with magical rapidity in all directions.

In this experiment, our weakness limits us to a small use of powers which, on a larger scale, are capable of rolling the river St. Lawrence up the Falls of Niagara. Students of nature know how to draw out the marvellous structural energy which lies latent in the solution, and bring it into action by withdrawal of opposing forces. This, and other uses by man of the powers in nature, as in a glass darkly, prepare us for operations of Higher Intelligence. Seeing the wonders which human genius can work, who shall set limits to the time, the manner, the place, for display of greater marvels by Higher Intelligence?

The little simple things of life can be clothed by our thought and science with beautiful and sublime garments. Our own advance in the glorious products of thought and art is somewhat akin to the ameliorative process that is being wrought in the earth. Our mind, working on and in connection with successive stages of the Earth's development, not only industrially cultivates terrestrial fields—enriching art and physical science; but carries on vital, intellectual, and emotional processes which give other and varied effectiveness. Operations,

which seem purely physical, enter man's emotional and moral consciousness, to open inner worlds of life and beauty. These processes remind us of certain crystals —say of fluor spar, which lie darkly for ages in the earth—and within them a potency of light is locked. Bring these crystals from the depth, warm them, and an outflow of light begins.

Turn where we will, the supernatural is blended with the natural. The human finger, by natural touch, casts down strong walls, and destroys mighty cities; by the Finger of God, with touch supernatural, are more marvellous things done—done softly, done blessedly, done without observation, to hold back the wind, send rain, bring prosperity, and renew life.

An unbeliever asserts—"In nature and from nature, by science and by reason, we neither have, nor can possibly have, any evidence of a Deity working miracles; for that we must go out of nature and beyond reason." By a little change in this assertion, you will see that the very opposite is the truth:—In nature and from nature, by science and by reason, we have—nor can we possibly have other than natural and reasonable evidence of a Deity working miracles: for we cannot go out of nature nor beyond reason.

"Ultra
Processit longe flammantia mœnia mundi"
LUCRETIUS, i. 74.

is a vain boast, and in the mouth of an atheist self-contradictory.

Again—"The literal sense of *physical events* impossible to science cannot be essential to spiritual truth . . . The philosopher denies the credibility of alleged

events professedly in their nature at variance with all physical analogy." If this philosopher had waited for the lame messenger, he would have spoken more wisely and thus—"The literal sense of physical events, which seem impossible to science by use of ordinary natural means, is essentially a proof of spiritual truth when divinely wrought by extraordinary means as proof. . . . The philosopher can only accept the credibility of alleged events—professedly at variance with all physical analogy—when those events are divine works wrought to give divine sanction to spiritual teaching."

Take one more statement, the substance was given long ago by Spinoza:—"If anything happened in nature at large repugnant to its universal laws, this would be equally repugnant to the decrees and intelligence of God." Really, it is very plain, these men, who would carry on the world wholly apart from its Owner and Maker, are out of their depth. They must mean—"If anything happened in nature at large repugnant to its universal laws; this event, as it could be wrought by Divine Power only, must be regarded as in accordance with, and for effectuation of, a higher policy than nature's ordinary work is able to effect."

Every one may detect for himself mysterious action surrounding and penetrating all things: action in no wise explainable, a depth of unfathomableness in the commonest events. Take an example—Between our mind and the outer world are interposed the bodily nerves; which translate, or cause to be translated, impressions from the outer world into facts of consciousness and thought. These facts of consciousness and thought, by reversal of the process, are translated into physical

reality by action of our bodies on the outer world. Science cannot explain this. The transition from the physical to the emotional and intellectual, and from the emotional and intellectual to the physical, is incomprehensible; even as is the mysterious action described in Holy Writ—"The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

We can so magnify, diminish, qualify, combine experiences, as to render them fit for purposes altogether new. Knowledge, in the mind of a thinker, is much more than the sum total of many separate parts. Sir W. Hamilton speaks of it as—"The science of effects, by their cause; of things evidently deduced from first principles; of truths sensible and abstract; of the original germ of the 'Ego' or mental self; of the absolute." Kant states—"Wissenschaft, die im eigentlichsten Verstande einen systematischen Zusammenhang hat, und allen andern Wissenschaften systematische Einheit giebt." A thoughtful man, acquainted with a fact, connects it with another: he knows then the aspect of each, that is two; then that of either to other, which makes at least four; then the resultants in relation, whether of antagonism or agreement, are at least sixteen in the first operation. Thus mental processes, in connection with emotional exercise, when operated upon by the Holy Spirit of God, lead to those various elevating and sanctifying changes which work love, repentance, faith, conversion, and all graces pertaining to the new life of a Christian. These marvellous uses of imagination and of reason's highest operation, are forgotten by those who narrow the work of mind to a mere tabulation of coexistences and sequences.

Take an experiment as to sound :—

We tune two tuning-forks, so far as we can, absolutely alike. They vibrate with the same rapidity and evoke the same musical note ; you scarcely hear it ; but mount them on a resonant stand, and they sing aloud. Stop one of the forks, and throw the other into yet stronger vibration ; bring it near the silent fork, but not into contact. After four or five seconds, stop the vibrating fork. What then ? The second has taken up the vibrations, and continues them on its own account. When they are stilled, dismount one fork and throw it into strong vibration, but at a distance you cannot hear it. Now bring the dismounted fork close to but not in contact with the silent mounted one, and out of the silence arises a mellow sound. By another experiment, a very distinct note can be made to vibrate from a tuning-fork near to the operator, the resonant one being far off and not heard. These are not meaningless, not even to the dullest mind. There is a law in music disobedience whereunto would bring our singing to a level with the maniac's shrieks, or to wild beasts' howlings. Obedience wins use and mastery of law. Men obey and concur to one end, by conscious contribution to some grand harmonious whole. By obedience, daily work and prayer, love of God becomes the structure of all thought, the moving principle of all action. The now unheard thrillings of dismounted human souls will be raised to the high-resounding courts of heaven, and all creation be ravished with the melody.

These acoustical experiments illustrate yet further our mental principle. They show that " as particular thoughts and ideas of things are arranged and connected

in the mind, exactly so are bodily modifications or images of things arranged and connected in the body" (Spinoza, by Frederick Pollock, p. 282). They further show how latent complex capacities are made active, and they give new character—a symbol of the new birth. Potentialities exist everywhere which only require to be brought into action, and new life is given. The physical world responds to our mental, moral, emotional nature, and our spiritual nature is moved by material activities; even an angel, if we are to hear his voice, must excite physical vibrations. Suppose that it is not so always; suppose the inner ear alone to be addressed, and vision vouchsafed to the inner eye only; would the angels' song on Christmas Eve, the vision and sound of the Lord in Eden, the glorious spectacle on the mount of Transfiguration, and the voice which Saul heard speaking to him in the Hebrew tongue, when he and his followers had all fallen to the earth, be less wonderful? By no means. Does the wonder cease by translation into a more marvellous sphere, and by being made wholly of spiritual discernment? Certainly not. Outer symbols of inner truths, physical forms of spiritual figures, are as the body of truth. When we awake sound from stillness, give tongue to the voiceless air, and mingle strains in harmony to delight the inner and outer man; we possess analogues of sweet associations, sacred sorrow and spiritual pleasure; of confession, as to sin, evoking a response that true righteousness is ours; of tremors, as to judgment, quickening movements of holiness within the soul and translating darkness into light.

All this, essentially, is miraculous; it is the linking

of the human with the divine ; and how true and natural the supernatural is, every man of insight may verify for himself. If any one say—" It is not marvellous in the sense that deniers of miracle require ;" we reply—It is truly miraculous. It shows that humanity is allied to Divinity, that nature is an outer court of the supernatural, that visible things are a precipitation from the invisible. It is admitted by the greatest physicists that all material phenomena are manifestations of the Unknown Power, and inexplicable and transcendental. It would be highly unscientific and unphilosophical to suppose that our reverence for Deity, and our consciousness of responsibility, are in relation to nothing, and tend toward that which has no existence. Every inward tendency implies an outward reality, even as every mystery is some foresight of the unknown. Religious emotion is the product of a real faculty which discerns, as by intuition, that the finite has its cause in the infinite. Aspirations as to truth, desires after purity, the struggle for perfect life, all spiritual or mental phenomena, spring from the Unknown Power, and are symbols of that Truth, that Purity, that Perfection, held by Christians to be Divine. The world is a vestibule, their bodies and souls are double doors to knowledge. The subtle play of flesh and spirit opens a way from ignoble uninteresting conditions, whence seemed no issue, and enables their life to possess present assurance of some blissful future. They come out from narrowness of brain, which conceives no needs differing from its own, to the exercise of sublime power in resolved unreserved self-renunciation. Renunciation which means untiring work, untiring patience, untiring watchfulness, in a world where myriads

of men and women are ground by wrong and misery, and tainted with pollution. The finest Christians are glad to live because the world is chiefly miserable, specially on that account is life worth living: they live to help some who need. They walk in the steps of Him, who never faltered in seeking the highest good; and the god-like power in them, and the celestial purity adorning them, and the new life given them (John i. 12, 13)—a mingling of the divine with the human, render them living symbols of that Redeemer in whom was the fulness of God.

THOUGHT XVI.

GROUPING OF MIRACLES.

"Miracles are the reflections in nature of the progressive spiritual development, and have their legitimate foundation in the connection between nature and Spirit. . . . Christ is the centre of this development, and the great miracle after Creation."—*Altered from* CHRISTLIEB.

WE scale heaven by means of astronomic ladder, and winged by scientific imagination pass from world to world. We divine the history of our earth, and intellectually present ourselves at its origination. We retrace the past, discern the present, foresee the future. All changes, subsequent to Creation, are but continuances of realities in another form; and our own continuance will not be as that of material particles in the bubble which bursts, neither is it meant to be, what Jeremy Taylor says, from the Greek, "πομφόλυξ ὁ ἄνθρωπος," "man is a bubble;" nor as the dissolution of moss and lichen into gases, but that maintenance of identity which gathers fruit from the flowers of present thought and work. This we know because all real knowledge is true; and responsibility, the highest knowledge of all, requires true personality and distinct individuality for preservation and continuance of essential identity.

Whatever may be the real texture of matter, the

true substance of mind, or the actual nature of life, our change will ensure that continuance of our essential selves which the scientific doctrine of continuity requires: for nothing can be annihilated—"Omnia mutantur, nihil interit;" and γένεσις and φθίσις, αὔξησις, and μείωσις, are really only ἀλλόιωσις. God does not unmake His own works. Continuance of our essential selves, whether as individuals or as a race, is not merely by repetition like that observed in physical nature; but, rather, by mental and moral march to some consummation. Evil, everywhere confronting us, we conquer by a truer voluntary righteousness than that which evil displaces. The life which springs from death overcome, aims at station more honourable than the former. The present wide and far-reaching disturbance is being allayed by a tranquillity, wide and deep, that shines with gladness; even as the dark confusion of chaos gave place to bright and ordered beauty. We trace historical order throughout. The Destroyer of Satan does not appear until the specific religious and the general human conditions of mankind have accomplished a fulness (Gal. iv. 4). The order of nature is so elevated that Woman, sanctified by the Spirit of God, conceives by the creative act of God; and Jesus, made under the law, fulfils all righteousness. The whole proves that history and human life are not held in mechanical bondage—a science, a philosophy, may everywhere be found as parts of a purpose truly magnificent, producing supernatural effects by intensification of nature's legitimate activity. The wicked punishes himself, the faithful crowns himself. Perdition is the fall prolonged here and hereafter. Redemption

is a given means for arrest of the fall and turning it into an upward career toward the Supreme.

Philosophy and science infer that Intelligence holds a relative but superior supremacy in nature to that which our own intelligence maintains in us. Our own intelligence has at least some power in the world, power limited because the intelligence is finite. Universal Intelligence we regard as a free creative Intelligence. This free creative subordinating Intelligence is that permanent which renders intelligible change possible. Only by intelligence can intelligible change be either effected or understood; therefore, the constitution of our mind leads us to regard Intelligence as King. Creation is an externalization, or concrete revelation of the Absolute in matter, life, intelligence, spirit. God, calling objective things into existence, reveals Himself as that great One whom our percipient mind regards as distinguished from the many—as the Cause of all that we know, material as well as mental. The greatest of all miracles, therefore, and that which renders other miracles possible and even probable, is creation. All other miracles may be regarded as only an emphasis of some special facts which have succeeded since the world came into being. The Supernatural Power as absolute, as apart from all, we cannot know as to His essence; but the Supernatural, so manifested as the Cause including all, we do know of; all objective existence proves that existence is something more than what we directly know, even as what we directly know is something more than our own sensations.

It is not perilous to task our reason even to the utmost in searching out the true utility and hidden

wisdom of creation. It is only, indeed, by exertion of our reason that we know, whether from Nature or Revelation, that there is an Eternal Cause; and from this knowledge, occupying itself in scrutinizing the atoms, we ascend to that high position whence wisdom contemplates the majesty of the whole—an empire rising from rough material things into living, mental, spiritual glory. Ignorance turns the greatest and best of God's gifts to evil; and knowledge that puffeth up, falsely called knowledge, does no better, and in a sort of way even worse; while true knowledge, guided by charity, is the light in which even the pages of Revelation are to be read. Co-ordinating natural facts, art and science obtain their triumphs. We reason, we imagine, we ascertain, as did Copernicus, as did Newton; and the herd of men derive solace and instruction from the genius and piety of the few. The sublime beauty of holy Prophets, the intellectual splendour of Plato, the harsher countenance of Tully, the grave broad front of Bacon, the care-worn features of Locke, Dante, and Milton, who sang of hell and of paradise, Shakespeare who has found a friend in all humanity, and the learned who make the recognition of God the basis of their study, are examples of the few who make broad paths for the many. They show that the universe, originated and maintained by law, is a more gorgeous palace than any that enchantment feigned to build. A creation by law, even though we frame that law out of purely scientific materials, is certainly supernatural. We conceive that an angel might be great and wise enough to build a world, but to build by law, by automatism in elements to produce intelligence out of utter

unreason, and order from essential disorder, is indeed Divine. If we admit creation by law, and science has no other explanation, then natural data are the superstructure raised upon supernatural facts. Indeed, the concrete parts of science, these crystallizations of law, enforce faith in intervention by Intelligence. We have no reason to think that antecedents are causes, and nearly every reason to think they are not causes, but parts in some teleological process; and that process, as far as it is reasonable, is only possible and can only be continued by impetus from Intelligent Energy. Hence, nature exists by means of the supernatural: laws, events, processes, are a grouping of miracles around the Creative Principle.

Passing from the Miracles of Creation, consider miracles in connection with our continuance as responsible beings. After the Flood and the transaction at Babel, they group about individuals who are made links between God and a people. There are three distinct periods of miracles. They gather round Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Christ and the Apostles. Cardinal Newman says, "Elijah's and Elisha's miracles almost anticipate our Lord's, as a sort of harbinger and first-fruits of His mighty works."

The groups of miracles surrounding Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, were in connection with a divine revelation and ministry which, though ultimately to become world-wide, was primarily for the guidance, maintenance, and correction of individuals and of Israel. Moses could not authoritatively and convincingly have made known to a rude and sensual people, the truth and holiness, wisdom and power, of God, unless miracles

at the sea, in the wilderness, the lightnings and thunders of Sinai, attested the divinity of his mission. Elijah, that one champion of Jehovah, could hardly have prevailed against a whole nation without help from God. These miracles present no very great difficulty to a really scientific mind. The fact may be shown by an easy process of thought.

One grand organic system of life and intelligence occupies the material world: a system of such unity with variety of progression, that science discerns a rational principle everywhere. The beginning is co-ordinated with the end by successive groups of marvels; and every infinitesimal is proved, by correlation, to emanate from the infinite and thither to tend. Our reason detects mystery everywhere, and is so constituted as to discern in that mystery a foresight of the unknown, hence we always believe that between the known and that of which we are ignorant there is something that we partially know, and in this way we feel linked to One unto whom all the obscurities of the infinite calculus are open. Turning from philosophy to science, we find that every living creature proceeds from a germ which has power to build up the organism with all its members and faculties. There is no great perceptible difference between the process by which is born the wild ass's colt, and that by which man is brought forth—though the essential differences may be manifold. The advance from low to high degree is by an immense number of interferences, constituting grades, contemporary or successive, between the undifferentiated particle and the sublime human organism; between the bold warrior who rises above his fellows, and those descendants who

form the foremost nation. The plant grows from a germ, first in the dark, then through sunshine and rain, producing stem, leaves, flowers, fruit. From zoophytic life up to the mammalia is another vast ascending scale; not only in bodily perfection, but in animating principle —whatever that may be—lifting up dull sluggish automatism, hovering on the borders of the insensate, to the speechless but conscious reason of the elephant and dog, thence to human intellect, language, responsibility. To every seed, to every kind, belongs its own powers of growth, or of automatism, or of sensation, or of sensibility, or of all. Throughout this curious variety, from the glimmer of the glow-worm to the genius that blazes in the human countenance, from the wandering tribe to the civilized nation, unity of power and plan shows a commingling of the natural and supernatural, and that the whole comes from one universal eternal source.

The great organic and intellectual boundaries, separating kind from kind, and complex from simple forms of life, and nation from nation, are not laid by inherent essential power of the constituent elements; for, in that case, as the elements are alike, or nearly so, the advance would be in all organisms and in all nations or in none. Instead of remaining a prey for cats, the mouse would develop itself into a superior animal—say the dog, and avenge ancestral wrongs; but a mouse remains a mouse, and rises not above its place, in countless generations. Observation discovers that things apparently alike in every part, become utterly unlike. We say it is by a law, so we endeavour to cover our ignorance, but rightly understood, law in natural process, and let us admit it, is essentially miraculous; for as nature does

not create, it cannot of itself constitute differences which are partial creations ; nor can any society of men, simply as a society, obtain for itself—apart from external aid—permanent and prosperous advance.

The modifications which fashion growth, and make old beings into new, or build up a mighty nation out of an obscure tribe, are sometimes by imperceptible growth, sometimes very sudden, sometimes most surprising. True knowledge of them is natural theology. An embryo of little more than a quarter of an inch in length is discerned to be that of a mole : the metamorphoses have been run through at a great rate, yet all of their own kind, and in their own order. These parables of nature are not parables only, but natural miracles ; and every miracle is a parable. Take a caterpillar : it does nothing but eat, it lives to eat ; it becomes a chrysalis, and is then in a trance without motion ; but such internal and external change is wrought that when the butterfly comes forth—neither eating nor drinking—it may fairly be called of another genus. Its shape so different, its nature so changed, its life so altered, its habits so various, that vast leaps have been made, great organic modifications wrought, as were an infinite book of secrets condensed into one page of insect life. With leaps equally surprising, whole orders are passed over in embryonic development to produce the permanent type of mammalia. By means of other leaps, not less surprising, some animals are endowed with a special cleverness, answering, in some lower degree, to the genius of men. These physical and psychological marvels, attending the progress and change of organisms, are some of those varieties in the general rule of

work which show unity in nature ; and possibly prepare for that superstructure of physical, mental, and moral marvels, which, co-ordinated by Revelation, constituted and continued the training of the Abrahamic family to become a nation of high degree. Biology, sociology, theology, though divergent sciences, have much in common. The spiritual is counterpart to the physical—Society is man multiplied. The Church, helped by Revelation, has directed immense intellect to consider the Life of God ; and, of all sciences, has brought most glory to the human mind. That mind now greatly exercised in physical science, not omitting even the chemistry of the stars, will not destroy but confirm and render more accurate the wonderful themes of theology. The spire that almost touches the stars, does not rise without support from the ground, it is built by the whole of human life. The common sense and experience of men are the massy substructure which renders possible the soaring steeple : that of Salisbury, faultless in its design, needed stones as much as the meanest modern tower. The natural and supernatural, earth and heaven, high and low, are linked. In the change of a poor grub's life and nature, there are physical and psychological marvels which science cannot account for and hardly tabulate ; everywhere we discern leaps and surprises which no physicist can explain ; they warrant credence in those well-attested but not more surprising marvels which produce, accompany, and develop the ministry of Moses, the prophecy of Isaiah, the life of Daniel.

The great group of miracles which surrounds Christ and the Apostles also blends with the world's unity. As

wrought by Him, or for Him, miracles attest His nature, His office, His work. They denote the physical and other changes which are to be wrought in the world, the victory to be gained over sin and death, the growth of righteousness. The whole history of miracles gathers round Christ the central miracle. He stands in connection with all as the One in whom they are summed. He speaks and works, not like Moses and Elijah—servants of the Almighty, but as the Son of God. Christ represents and heads mankind in the struggle against evil; represents and heads mankind in obeying God; represents God, ay, is God Himself, even as He was man himself; displays love and grace, power and purity, not to coerce but win the affections of men.

The chain of evidence which linked our science and faith as to the first group, also binds our understanding to the miracles of Christ and the Apostles: but, as use of a varied process gains additional evidence, we will think in another form:—

Every New Testament miracle is more or less prophetic, regards both present and future time: is effectual for physical help, for moral training, for doctrinal teaching. We need but think of the miracles as to bread in order to see a meaning that concerns the life of the world. The wine at Cana's marriage feast is symbolic of better drink at a higher marriage and spiritual banquet. Marvels on the water, in the wilderness, in the city; miracles of healing and resurrection; are tokens of a great power which has come into the world to bind men to God and His Christ. They are object lessons concerning the energizing presence of God in the world; especially, of God in Christ; we know—

"That the base world, now Christ hath died,
Ennobled is and glorified."

KEBLE.

Putting aside all recondite reasoning, lest we make the supernatural seem natural, we lay hand on a familiar and lowly example—the Bee—

"Ignavum fucos pecus . . .
. . . innatus apes amor urget habendi,
Munere quamque suo . . .
. . . et fœdere pacto
Exercentur agris . . .
. . . labor omnibus unus,
Vesper ubi è pastu tandem decedere campis
Admonuit, tum tecta petunt . . .
. . . Rege incolumi mens omnibus una est."

VIRGIL, *Georg.* iv.

In a hive, say of 30,000, are the queen, the drones, the workers. The queen—with sensations, perceptions, capacities in common with her subjects—has those qualities which incite and enable her to lead forth her subjects in migrations and swarmings. The drones—possessed with a love of home—are apparently idle. Their sisters—the workers—are endowed with the love of perpetual labour and gifted with mechanical skill. The various physical and psychological varieties, in one and the same kind of insect, constitute a world of wonders. In tiny form, we find a ganglionic apparatus and instincts so varied and marvellous that all the efforts of a hundred naturalists fail to explain; a wonderful series of physical breaks, leaps, surprises, and endless psychological marvels. In every working bee are the senses of sight, hearing, taste, feeling, smell; the love of work, and love of honey. Every one is impelled to wander over fields, and to search for flowers. Every

one possesses skill to find, and will to carry off, the three sorts of material needed in the hive. They all remember or find the way home again, however distant, taking the nearest line thereto. They elaborate wax, build cells, deposit honey, feed the children of their queen.

". . . So work the honey bees.
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home,
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad
* * * * *
Which pillage they with merry march bring home
To the tent royal of their emperor.
* * * * *
The civil citizens kneading up the honey;
The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burthens at the narrow gate."

SHAKESPEARE.

The intelligence or instinct guiding them assumes mathematical form in building hexagons, economical form in use of material, martial form in governing the action of their sting, loyal form in obedience to their queen, and social form in binding the workers—the aristocrats—the royalty—into one people or nation. Are these minute preparations, arrangements, complications, for the safety and government of a little people, more easy to explain, more natural, less marvellous, than the grander preparations—arrangements—complications which surround the Redemption of the world? The lilies of the field are so clothed by the Almighty, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. A marvellous store of wisdom, of goodness, of might, is expended in the welfare of every insect. There is not much meaning in the distinction between a general and a particular Providence. To the Infinite

Being the general and the particular are the same; and not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Heavenly Father's knowledge. These tiny facts are a window through which we behold Infinity. Their lowliness does not lower the majesty of Christ's works, and the universality of beneficence for the small renders it certain that God, who cares more for us, has done wonderful things for the continuance of our being, and for the exaltation of our destiny.

Miracles of Creation, miracles under the Law, miracles of the Gospel, are parts in one great plan. The whole of Nature and Grace is cradled in Miracle, and nurtured in the Supernatural. Dull matter awakes into life, life into intelligence, intelligence into moral responsibility. Creation brings this before us in outward material process. Redemption is the conducting of all things, that are capable, to the heights of life, of mind, of spirit, by inner sanctifying process. Moses and Joshua, types of Christ, lead out from Egypt—bring into Canaan. Elijah and Elisha are harbingers of the Lord and His works. Those works—whether unfolded in earliest pages of Scripture, or wrought by the last of Adam's race who doeth wonders—are one linked process. Material counterpart is everywhere, and in every counterpart is a shadow of the mystery by which all in the universe, receptive of blessing, shall be glorified. Our conviction of the supernatural, our faith in marvels, are the true nourishment of our being. Knowledge, truth, love, beauty, goodness, faith, are the supreme facts of life. The music that brings childhood back, and with it songs of heaven; prayer that calls God nigh, the doubt which makes us meditate, death startling us with

mystery, and faith which sees the future; make life worth living. All grand things join on to the very small. The telescope is but a tube and glass, yet therewith we search the nature of distant stars. The clay mould is fragile, but the gold poured in retains noble form for ages. The photographer's plate sees light for a moment, and flowers are frail; but momentary light paints lasting beauty, and the flower by its seed lives on for ever. Lucian said, "The world is a stream and men rise up as bubbles." Homer called man—"a leaf." Pindar said, "He is the dream of a shadow." Jeremy Taylor ("Holy Dying") said, "Man is as a vapour and fantastical, or a mere appearance; and . . . the very dream, the vapour, the phantom, disappears in a small time, 'like the shadow that departeth,' or 'like a tale that is told,' or 'as a dream when one awaketh.'" That bubble contains a world. That leaf becomes a plant of renown. That dream passes into waking for weal or woe. That vapour will attain life in glorious angelic form. That fantastical appearance will settle into eternal reality. There are who walk on velvet lawns and marble terraces—daintily shod and velvet-mantled; they may not be the equals of those who press through storms on rough cold heights, or who walk in depths of misery with bare feet, naked breasts—jaded, mangled, chilled—meant to be men of mark. The graces of patience, faith, hope, love, are not in us as pictures slid in magic lantern; but by a work giving substance, moulding form, and quickening spirit. Our God is not an apothecary—with good things put up in a bottle to be had for the asking. We must work out every prayer with reverential fear in the presence of the Holy One to

whom we pray. We become strong in grace, by His gift of this or that as we need. The science of our life grows into ambition to build up a happiness beyond the reach of all adversity: happiness extending from one's own heart in joyful effort to cheer the griefs of all who walk with us. It is a science which sanctifies and elevates the laws of intelligence, even as the laws of life transcend their natural base. The sacred is an excellent counterpart of the secular: shows how God is kinder to the holy than other men can know—giving hope, joy, glory, in unseen depths of the soul. Chemistry extracts pure metal and spirit refined, from foulest matter. Old gold is minted with new image and superscription. A higher chemistry makes the human divine, and in the mint of God all coin receives a heavenly impression. Scientific eyesight and insight discern that in movement of the mass every unit has its separate passion, and that the storm which rocks the tree also moves a world in every leaf. A block of ice, under the converged sunbeam, will present below the surface glittering stars of six-petal rays graceful and minute: the rays are frosted flowers with the lustre of burnished silver. Deep in our hearts the glorious God cherishes miracles; with the sunny power of love, gives splendour to the conscience; and as frost and cold melt into water-drops and trickle hither and thither, our softened refined affections are fashioned into stars of faith and hope and love which fill our being with light. We awake to the energy of free-will, and with noble alertness spring to our wonderful duty. Miracles cluster in us—they are gorgeous works. The miracles of creation, of Moses and Joshua, of Elijah and Elisha, of Christ and the Apostles, are series of pic-

tures in God Almighty's gallery. We may think of them as did Doddridge in his dream of what was after death. We shall die. After that, in a little while, clad with spiritual body, we shall be accompanied by angelic attendants to a glorious palace. There we shall rest from all previous toil, and our rest will be calm contemplation—blissful study—occupations of delight. Series of glories in that Heavenly Mansion will attract our eye, natural processes in moving panorama, elemental progress, mystic passage to life; life sensitive, life mental, life emotional. Past events will be interpreted in the clearness of present exalted experience; why and how, in this conflict and that temptation, the work of grace went on. The meaning of perils, accidents, overtaking-faults, will be read in natural and supernatural history. Merciful guidance, discerned everywhere; and all along the line attendant angels—unperceived before, as to Jacob in the almond groves of Luz. Contemplation becoming more blissful, our love, our admiration, our reverence, find life in growing praise. We know that around Creation, the Fall, the Redemption, and encircling every child of man to make him a very son of God, are miracles grouped: splendid witnesses of the Almighty.

The statement has been made that our Lord in His teaching, and that the Apostles in their preaching and writing, did not lay much stress upon miracles.

The statement is erroneous. Our Lord said that the Jews would be justified in their refusal to accept Him, had He not done among them works which no other man did (John xv. 24). S. Paul states plainly that the whole truth of Christianity rests on the miracle of

Christ's resurrection, and that Christ's resurrection is proof of the general resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 12–17). S. Peter asserts the ascension of Christ, and the second advent of Christ (1 Pet. iii. 22, v. 4); the miracle of divine inspiration and prophecy, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the renewal of the world (2 Pet. i. 21, ii. 6, iii. 10–13). S. James declares that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and that prayers are miraculously answered (Jas. v. 7, 14–18). The whole argument and all the facts of the Epistle to the Hebrews are based on the miraculous. S. Jude, in his small Epistle, mentions at least eight miracles (see verses 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14). S. John states that our Lord's miracles were too numerous for relation (John xxi. 25). It is high time for men to know that all Scripture and the whole of Nature are based on miracle and confirmed by miracle. Is it not a miracle that He, whose sceptre was a reed, whose diadem was a crown of thorns, whose throne was a cross, is filling the world with His doctrine, and winning all men to His sway?

THOUGHT XVII.

SPIRITUAL INSIGHT.

"He that hath God's Word can hear His silence."

"Day following day with the starlit darkness between;
Or, may be in a world where Dawn comes, ere one sunset has been;
Day following day for ever!
For ever! though who shall tell in what seeming or where?
In what far-off secret space of God's limitless air?
It matters nothing at all what we are or where set,
If a spark of the Infinite Light can shine on us yet,
Life following Life for ever!"

The Ode of Life.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."—1 John iii. 2.

STEP by step, the moral, intellectual, and spiritual realms, with all the complex action of human life, are being added to the domain of inductive science. Our best thinkers endeavour to carry the exactitude of physical law into the mental world, and to use the elasticity of spiritual rule for wiser interpretation of the material universe. We, thereby, obtain more freedom and more accuracy; our knowledge is corrected and enlarged concerning both sides of life. The thought which is in nature and in man, in all things and existences, is not a thought which we create but find in them; not an

intelligible system which our mind can make or unmake, but which we discern; it is a rationality independent of our reason, but to which our reason responds. All science starts with the assumption that nature is intelligible, that there is reason in things; and the progress of science is by discovery of relations, of a coherent system, in the world. The history of science is a history of intelligence tracing itself in nature. Our reason, irresistibly impelled to find the reasonable, discovers in the manifold and changeful phenomena of the world something above them, a permanent reality, an infinite unity; something which comprehends all finite things and thoughts because it is the Unity of Thought and Being. There are few atheists, because atheism is inevitable foolery: it takes up the self-contradicting absurdity of finding the reason of thought, and the intelligence of all rational religions, in the irrational—a blank nonentity.

Condorcet, quoted by Mill, "Logic," ii. 400, says, "Le seul fondement de croyance dans les sciences naturelles est cette idée, que les lois générales, connues ou ignorées, qui reglent les phénomènes de l'univers, sont nécessaires et constantes; et par quelle raison ce principe serait-il moins vrai pour le développement des facultés intellectuelles et morales de l'homme, que pour les autres opérations de la nature?" This view of the world from both sides, or rather from within and without, shows the intimate linking of matter and mind. We cannot say, "Mind is matter and matter is mind," for no matter has life of itself, and it is far more certain that no matter thinks of itself. Mind, then, is a real existence; otherwise, it could not be subject to physical

laws; subject—so far as it must use the brain for a vehicle, and molecular tremors as messengers of quick transit to establish the rule of emotion and will. By insight and eyesight we discern that—

"There is only change for ever!
Shall I fear that I shall be changed and no more shall be I?
I who know not what 'tis that I am, to live or to die?
Nay, while God is, I too must be, else too weak were His hand,
The created is part of His Essence—how else could the Matter stand?
There is no Death for ever!"

The Ode of Life.

Materialists and secularists who say, "You cannot live for both worlds, because you do not know both, you know but one"—are convicted of folly by the fact that the attempt to live a one-sided life is always a miserable failure, ending in moral death to the individual, and in extinction of the nation.

It is admitted that moral welfare is necessary to material well-being, that to preserve the "mens sana in corpore sano" mental energy must combine with physical activity. By this union of the mental and physical, of the inner vitality of intelligence and emotion with outer life and bodily powers, the two form one man—one realm. We cannot, as some refusers of Scripture do, allow miracles in one realm and deny them in the other. The laws of mind are not less real and true than are those of the body, marvels in those are as miraculous as marvels in these. Every miracle has two sides: subjective, *i.e.* in our consciousness; objective, *i.e.* external to our consciousness; the objective side may be natural or supernatural, *i.e.* worked by means of nature, or worked directly without intervention of means. On one side, the objective, reason investigates miracle as

a matter to be solved, if possible, by physical science, if not soluble, reason waits expectant and watchful; on the other, the subjective side, reason investigates morally, spiritually; and it is only when miraculous narratives are approved by reason that they become articles of faith. Our mind is not incapable of rising to the Infinite, nor does the Infinite suffer diminution by becoming relative to our thought. The Mind discerned in nature, and unveiling itself in miracle, is the very kind to realize itself in the thought and self-consciousness of finite intelligence—in every page, paragraph, sentence, word, syllable, of intelligent existence. Our consciousness that we are finite, in that very thought transcends itself and finds a real relation between itself and the Infinite. Our self-conscious ego transcends all differences, both external and internal, and has its origin in that which is implicitly intelligent. This insight rather spiritualizes matter than materializes mind. It discerns that in the whole range of being nothing is absolutely foreign and hostile to thought: nothing which thought, actually or virtually, may not claim as its own. Thus, it is the prerogative of mind virtually to possess a kind of infinitude; to be ever discovering, in that which is external to it, the means of its own progressive development—a realization which is itself incapable of limitation. Day by day, in being ourselves, we become more than ourselves; escape further and further from the finitude of individual self, and approximate more and more to the unlimited and universal. The process is never a completed one: we are ever gaining a larger self, as the natural and spiritual limits are broken down, a further limit ever reappears.

We do not go out of nature and beyond reason to prove miracles, any more than we depart from physics in mentally considering material effects. No physical fact is absolutely unique; nor does our limited knowledge allow us fully to verify it; it is dependent upon ten thousand other facts which are absolutely unknown. No miracle stands apart by itself—unrelated, uncaused as to origin, or working, or effect—as if it sprang from nothing. Physical science, incompetent to explain fully any natural event, calls for faith in the unseen and unknown. In faith we accept physical axioms as universally true, though the universality is incapable of proof. Spiritual science rests its natural accuracy on physical axioms and the laws of reason; shows its miracles as performed by an adequate power, for worthy purpose, and in connection with a vast ameliorative plan; does not hide them within the pale of the Sanctuary, but carries them forth into the physical field for trial in the open conflict of faith against unfaith, of reason against unreason, of good against bad, of eternal life against eternal death. In this sense, and not superstitiously, Canon Cook ("Lectures on the Completeness and Adequacy of the Evidences of Christianity") says, "Miracles will be used as subsidiary and supplementary enabling you to give a reason for the faith that is in you, both for your own satisfaction and for the defence of Christian truth."

It is impossible to live without faith. The wisest of us whether we will or not, believe much more to be true than we can verify. Materialists, little in faith as to religion and miracles, are so laughably credulous as to secularism that they say, "The invariable operation

of a series of eternally impressed consequences, following in some necessary chain of orderly causation, is read in all history, life, and spirit." Spiritual insight reveals the inadequacy of that statement: shows that physical antecedents and sequences are not always the same; but are capable of, and receive infinite variety and modification by law within law which is not yet tabulated. "Whether science be regarded from the point of view of its premises, its inferences, or the general relation of its parts, it is found defective . . . the ordinary proofs, which philosophers and men of science have thought fit to give of its doctrines, are not only mutually inconsistent, but are such as would convince nobody who did not start with an implicit and indestructible confidence in the truth of that which had to be proved" ("Defence of Philosophic Doubt," A. J. Balfour). Spiritual science appeals to law, divine and human, to experience, to consciousness, to history. It makes known the fact that physical strength and material well-being are accompaniments and consequences of moral purity and intelligent activity; that purity, whether moral or physical, cannot be lasting in an individual, or permanent in a nation, separated from the sacred reverence arising from a desire to be well-pleasing unto God. Considering the many lines of proof, every devout person rightly regards the Christian Faith as possessing even philosophic certitude, and accepts supernatural facts as arousing and solemnizing strong motive to serious action and holy life.

"ἐκ δ' ὑγιείας φρενῶν ὁ πᾶσιν φίλος καὶ
πολύευκτος ὄλβος . . .
βωμὸν αἴδεσαι δίκης . . .

κύριον μένει τέλος . . .
δίκαιος ὤν
οὐκ ἄνολβος ἔσται·
πανώλεθρος δ' οὔποτ' ἂν γένοιτο."

ÆSCHYLUS, *Eum.*, 507.

Opponents of miracles speak of Moses' large serpent and the small ones of Jannes and Jamres; of great wonders by true prophets, and of lesser wonders by false prophets; of the transcendent works of Christ, and of operations by the Prince of Darkness; not in acceptance of any, but in utter denial of all. Inquiring for the quantitative difference, they assert all are true or none; if all are not demonstrative of goodness, Christ is none the better for doing works such as no other man was able to perform.

We reply—"corruptio optimi pessima." The difficulty is not greater than that which accompanies gifts and uses of other powers. Men may be as angels of goodness, or as demons of darkness, every endowment can be rightly used, or utterly perverted; be brought to nothing, or be marvellously exalted. Goodness and badness depend upon the inward motive: the inner perfection of Christ is outwardly manifested and proved by works of purity and might in alliance with the Supreme. The moral depravity of the Evil One, and of all like him, is evidenced by passing into enormity and godlessness. No shadow of fiction is here, no empty abstraction; and, as *ex nihilo nihil fit*, the palpable reality is visible proof of the exciting cause. We present no solution of evil, it was not an essential part of the Divine Scheme; it is not an essential in anything, and is by all means to be driven away. The effects, as to our own world, were foreseen ere its foundation; and pro-

vision made in Christ for our pardon and cure. It came in, we conceive, by the abused freedom of an intelligent creature or creatures; it is overruled so as to be unto us a peculiar means of discipline, and the procuring cause of a specially wonderful plan for our amelioration, and the taking away of all evil from faithful men, by the Son of God.

Physical evil is a growth out of, and in some respects the embodiment of, spiritual evil; and is material antagonism to God, corresponding with the inner spiritual resistance of human or Satanic will to the Divine Will. "Ἀλλ' οὔτ' ἀπολέσθαι τὰ κακὰ δυνατόν· ὑπεναντίον γὰρ τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἀεί τι εἶναι ἀνάγκη· οὔτ' ἐν Θεοῖς αὐτὰ ἱδρύσθαι, τὴν δὲ θνητὴν φύσιν καὶ τόνδε τὸν τόπον περιπολεῖ ἐξ ἀνάγκης" (Plato, "Theætetus," ch. 84). Both difficulties are explicable by mere physics; nor is our present sight, even aided by spiritual optics, sufficiently far-seeing and comprehensive to bring the whole within view. The only unerring attainable physical conclusion is—our world is not perfect; in some way or other, it and all it contains have been marred. This marring renders the creation, as subject to ordinary laws, incapable of manifesting and maintaining a perfectly true and fully convincing view of Divinity. Nature and its laws are not everywhere beneficial: indeed, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain" (Rom. viii. 22). "La nature toute entière, n'ayant plus l'intelligence humaine pour l'élever vers Dieu, brisa l'harmonie de ses concerts, et ne laissa plus échapper de ses entrailles douleureuses qu'un gémissement immense."

Spiritual insight carries our view somewhat further. If God is God—a real God; not merely the contriver

of a physical organization, but of an organism suitable to the wants of responsible beings, He must be regarded as capable of voluntary action. "What is a Deity deprived of miraculous action, but a Deity deprived of action; and what is a Deity deprived of action, but an impersonal force which is no object of prayer?" (Mozley, "Bampton Lectures," iv. p. 84). Not only so, as our own personality cannot spring from impersonality—otherwise something can come from nothing—God must be Personal: worship, as a religious act, implies a personal object. A Personal God acting by Volition, is more than a Force; He is a moral being with will and power of action. "Causa omnium quæ fecit Deus, voluntas ejus est" (S. Augustine). Locke says, "It is as certain that there is a God as that the opposite angles made by the intersection of two straight lines are equal." That which we discover in nature is essentially rational. The unities which we call laws, which link together in order, system, intelligible relation, all parts of the universe, are a revelation of an Intelligence in whom absolute trust is to be reposed. Devout men know this. Love of the Supernatural is no fictitious feeling. We are living amid mighty and deep influences, which, originally set going by miraculous power, are now natural. "Does a miracle, regarded as mere prodigy or portent, appear to be a mean, rude, petty, and childish thing? Turn away from that inadequate aspect of it. Look at it as an instrument which has shown and proved its power in the actual result of Christendom" (Mozley, "Bampton Lectures," i. p. 21).

By spiritual insight, whether we view things from the human side, or the divine; or regard religion as the life

of God in the soul, or the surrender of the soul to God; we have more than a far-off vision of the supernatural and miraculous: the finite is elevated to the infinite, and the infinite is realized in the finite. By the very first spring of religious life, God—who was before a transcendental object, ever inaccessible—becomes a present reality. The division and distance between the human spirit and the object of worship vanish, we rest in God. Ever after, as we continue to abide in Him, our heart is suffused with His presence and life. In the progress of religious life, growth in grace, attainment of the best gifts, is continuous, endless, approximation of likeness to God—the only real, and the highest possible destiny for man. This growth of the actual into the ideal, this possession of the Infinite as our Home, renders man an actual partaker of the power of Divine life.

Now take spiritual insight of a few natural facts. The optic nerve, passing from the brain to the back of the eyeball, spreads out there to form the retina—a web of cells, fibres, and filaments, to receive the images of external objects. This nerve is limited to apprehension of the phenomena of radiation; not making all the rays visible, which are infinite in variety—only those forming the spectrum. These rays pass through space by a medium invisible, and beyond the reach of any of our senses. Space, though traversed by rays from all suns and stars, is itself unseen; but everywhere sky particles are strewn through the atmosphere, and often they swathe the mountain-peaks, spread a delicate gauze over slopes of pine, and so mingle heaven and earth that we are as men already with firm footing on the promised land. We feel that our destinies are in

that land. We are sure that when we sink into darkness and enter eternity, the darkness will be made light about us, and eternity not a continual transition of deaths —not an abandonment of home after home—will ever lead to fairer scenes and loftier heights.

Now take an experimental tube, fill it with atmospheric air and nitrite of amyl vapour. The tube seems quite empty, the air and vapour are both invisible. Let an electric beam play upon the mixture, slightly converging the beam to a focus in the middle of the tube. The tube remains dark for a moment, then suddenly the darkness is banished by a luminous white cloud pierced by the beam, and a shower of liquid particles flashes forth like a solid luminous spear. Change the scene and experiment. Ascend a hill when the sun is near setting and a few scattered neutral-tint clouds float in the air but fail to catch the dying light. Use a Nicol's prism to look at them through the track of the solar beams, turn the prism ninety degrees round its axis: at once the sky's brightness is restored, and the clouds are dark in contrast with it. Take other positions of the prism, and the light of the sky is so nearly quenched that the clouds are white in the darkness. These simple experiments, by means of which the sky seems so changed—a change wrought by means which are put in operation by the mind and will of man, may be fairly deemed typical of apparent and real changes wrought in us, and wrought in nature, by agencies put in operation by the Will of God.

> "We are part of an Infinite scheme,
> All that we are;
> Man the high crest and crown of things that be,

The fiery-hearted earth, the cold unfathomed sea,
The central sun, the intermittent star.
Things great and small,
We are but parts of the Eternal All;
We live not in a barren, baseless dream;
No endless, ineffectual chain
Of chance successions launched in vain;
But every beat of Time,
Each sun that shines or fails to shine,
Each animate life that comes to throb or cease,
Each life of herb or tree
Which springs aloft and then has ceased to be,
Each change of strife and peace,
Each soaring thought sublime,
Each deed of wrong and blood,
Each impulse towards an unattainèd good,—
All with a sure, unfaltering working tend
To one Ineffable, Beatific End.
Oh hidden Scheme, perfect Thyself and take
Our petty lives, and mould them as Thou wilt!
All things that are, are only for Thy sake,
And not to obey Thee is our only guilt.
Perfect Thyself, and be fulfilled, oh great
Unfathomable Will, who art our Life and Fate."

The Ode of Life.

All the colours of the solar spectrum may be extracted from dark rays. In darkness men can prepare heat sufficient to set London on fire. Platinum is made red hot by means of heat that the optic nerve is utterly unconscious of. Out of invisible vapour can be formed a deeper, purer blue than that of an Italian sky. After due preparation, stand at a distance of twenty feet from a jet of gas, and, at command, the flame emits a melodious note, and continues a song for hours, to be heard by a thousand people. These are natural wonders, a light-giving insight: so that when we read in Holy Writ that God made the Bush to shine as were it His pavilion; gave light in the land of Goshen; turned His face in

dark cloud against the Egyptians; assured brightness to Israel; sent fire to consume fifties of the ungodly; and radiated blessed light from the form and robes of Jesus —causing Apostles to wonder; we thank Him for these displays of goodness and might: and thank Him for the gift of reason and science, as a means whereby we obtain physical illustrations to aid our spiritual discernment of divine realities. We find the Thought which is embodied in nature, which alone makes science or knowledge of nature possible, rising in miracles to a new stage in the process of self-revelation, and flashing out with new and stronger proof of its presence. This thought involves two powers: 1, the ability to transcend our own individuality, of carrying ourselves into that which lies beyond us and seems to limit us; 2, that potentiality of consciousness which recognizes the absolute unity of thought and being, unity on which rest all finite knowledge and existence. The first of these two principles—a never-ceasing impulse to transcend ourselves, the second—pointing to universal Mind as that intimate explanation of all things, are the basis of religion. Herder ("Geist der Ebräischen Poesie") says, "Jene Wüste, die gleichsam ganz Feuer und Fels ist, muss einen dürren Strauch tragen, in dem ihn die Gegenwart des Ewigen wecket und sich ihn offenbaret."

These witnesses and testimonials as to miraculous things can only be known by the unthinking many in general and superficially. Like all matters of high science, they are to be verified by a chosen few; and, in this science, the learners are taught of God. It is written of the Lord's resurrection—"Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; not to all

the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us." Miracles are sparks, kindled by Omnipotence, to brighten on the wheel of nature. Varieties are the sport of Wisdom to diversify the level of life. We are glad of these lights which God throws on creation to illumine the great picture of His own painting. They are a touch of nature by Divinity, a re-creation in creation, making nature affect the Supernatural, that the ways of God, even the laws of His sanctifying Will and Grace, may become part of the knowledge of man and helps to his spirit affording insight of heaven. This truth gives wisdom to the minds of men, and drops happiness as honey into the mouths of babes.

THOUGHT XVIII.

ACTION OF SPIRIT ON MATTER.

"Two principles of all existence, the active and the passive: the passive, which is but the characterless stuff of the world; the active, which is the Reason that pervades it, even God."—DIOGENES LAERTIUS, vii. i. 134.

"We view and embrace some end abstractedly from means. Then we create means, labour for, and finally obtain, the end by the physical effects of instrumental causes."—ANON.

"A miracle, so to speak, has a foot in each world."—MOZLEY, *Bampton Lectures*, v. p. 101.

MEN, taught by nature and reason, hold the physical in subordination to the moral and spiritual. Science aims at controlling and elevating the laws of matter by those of mind. Notwithstanding this well-known fact, and the daily experience that our thought, our spirit, does control matter, those who deny the direct action of the Spirit of God on matter to work miracles, say, "The analogy of nature does not furnish any instance of mental feeling causally influencing an object or an event with which it has no physical connection."

The assertion is only superficially scientific. Put it in another form by alteration of two words—"The analogy of nature does not furnish any instance of physical power causally influencing an object or an event

with which it has no physical connection." How then do physicists account for the passage of light, heat, electricity, magnetism, gravity, through space? By supposing—for no actual proof exists—that there is a medium, a sort of ethereal link, or way, by which matter acts through space upon other distant and diverse matter. Let us, then, suppose, in our case, as physicists do in theirs, that there is a medium through which Spirit acts in ruling the world. The mystery is like many other mysteries which science cannot unfold.

If materialists will not concede the probability that such a medium exists, we do without the concession, and reason thus:—Our thought seems to possess almost unbounded freedom in the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting, diminishing, the materials gathered by our senses; but we cannot create thought any more than we can create matter. Let him who thinks that he can create thought, try to empty his mind of memory, of knowledge of everything, and then, out of the nothing, make something: he cannot. If so with a man, certainly there is no power in an unintelligent substance to think, or create an idea. Our opponents may take their choice —"Thought is a property of matter," or "Thought is an attribute of some spiritual substance which we call mind." In either case, matter did not and does not always think; and, as there is no known or knowable link between matter and spirit, intelligence did begin, some time or other, to act upon matter with which, before that time, it had no physical connection.

View it in another way:—

Thought, idea, belief, sentiment, are acts, emotions, or states of the mind, which exist within us by means of

excitement from within and without; and their nature is determined by the situation, or condition, in which the mind is placed at any particular juncture by presentation of objects to the senses and memory. We can make fictions, but only by putting reals into contrariety with our experience; feign centaurs and mermaids by joining the head of man to the body of a horse, or the head and body of a woman to the tail of a fish.

> "Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
> Jungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas
> Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
> Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne."
>
> HORACE, *Ars Poet.*, i.

These fictions never attain, in the mind of a sane person, to the reality of belief. Belief is that something in us which separates the ideas of our reason from fictions of the imagination; gives them weight and value in our opinion, and constitutes them the ruling principles of our conduct; so that the figment of an enchanted castle, *château en Espagne*, possesses not the hold, or reality in us, which is obtained by existing things. The process of belief, in every well-ordered mind, is in accordance with, or by a kind of pre-established harmony between, the course of nature and the succession of our ideas; acting on this belief, we are able to adjust means to an end, and conjoin knowledge to the use of our natural powers—whether to do good or evil. Belief, therefore—or trust in the reality of things—becomes, or is, a kind of base to that internal energy by which we voluntarily, and sometimes involuntarily, act on and through the organs of our body, or direct the faculties of our mind. It is a conscious or unconscious

conviction whereby externals and internals excite volition of the spiritual substance, called "soul;" which soul, or mind, controls the material substance of our body. Hence, we may say—Belief is both trust and knowledge as to the fact that matter acts upon intelligence in forming conviction, and intelligence acts upon matter when putting conviction into use or work; but as to the essential nature of the operation we do not know anything.

Spirit and matter, apart from themselves and each, may communicate with one another directly from afar; or there may be many and different media, who knows? The imponderables, heat, light, electricity, magnetism, gravity, communicate with one another and with other things; what is the medium? or are there more than one? Is æther the only one? or may there be others—both inner and outer? Some men experience divine comfort; others, though outwardly in prosperity, drink daily at sources of passionate human woe. There are souls in whom tenderness and reason exquisitely combine, and some make errors to be almost a charm because of rare and beautiful genius. Lucretius, the most thoughtful bard of the Romans, whose feeling ever was that the things men set their minds on are but vanity and vexation of spirit, wrote—"There is a secret and evil spring even in the fairest fountain of delight, and it bubbles up eternally to seethe bitter waters over the very flowers which surround its margin." Truly, there is more than mechanical mixture in all this: some mystic play of spirit with spirit.

By what medium is the instinct of animals imparted, and so imparted that not only every species has its own

nature, but every individual its own character? The disposition of one fly is not the disposition of another, nor the magnanimity of one mouse the measure of another's courage. We do not know what physical connection there is between the serpent's fascination and the victim's impulse toward the object of dread. The protean nature of the grub, the chrysalis, the butterfly, is not fully explained; nor do we find any sufficient account of the mental action on and in our own frame. Matter, at a distance, acts upon us; and our mind, through distance, acts upon matter; otherwise, why do we close our eyes to aim the better? It is to prevent externals weakening our power of concentration. Why do we even shut our ear against reason, that we may have more abundant compensation in faith? It is because, as Balfour ("Defence of Philosophic Doubt," p. 320) says—"I and an indefinite number of other persons, if we contemplate Religion and Science as unproved systems of belief standing side by side, feel a practical need for both . . . need from which we would not, if we could, be freed." When the imagination, in witty mood with laborious pencil, transfigures or represents the shapes, proportions, and distances of persons and places; it is by an operation of that we call spirit in connection with what we call matter, and of what we call matter with that we call spirit. The outward world affects our organs of sense, and the working of a perverted intellect may hinder the spirit in attending to unseen verities. The connection and the mingling are that enigma of human life, which we do well devoutly to study, for vintage of the natural, and for gleaning of the spiritual. Piercings of matter by these gleams of thought testify

of an inward affinity borne by all nature to the spirit-world. They amount to a practical cause of belief, from the effects of which we do not desire to be released.

There is no possible knowledge of the world, except in reference to our minds; and whatever is real is rational. Solidity, extension, space, fundamental properties of the material world—the surface show of things, while provinces of investigation beneath which we seek the ultimate measure and essence—respond to certain movements of our bodies; and exist in our minds as sentiments of force, as visual and tactile impressions. The conclusion at which Mr. Bain seems to arrive is—The feeling and the felt are not two terms, but two complementary parts of the same whole. This ought not to be hastily accepted, for we can hardly believe that the mind obtains all its information concerning the material universe through medium of the five senses—"a medium which altogether excludes a great deal, and distorts much that it allows to pass" (Balfour, "Defence of Philosophic Doubt"). Our knowledge really says, "There is, on the one hand, a material universe, and on the other a mind. The world and mind seem so correlated that nature is bound into one organism; physical and vital phenomena, natural and mental and moral emotions, are transformations of motion—motion which mechanism can only in part explain; every phenomenon is instinct with all-pervading energy by which it is and is what it is; and while giving it real being finds its ground and essence in Him who comprehends and transcends all—God."

The organic chain of nervous actions, of visible and invisible links, of visible and invisible messages, answers

to the fact that every mental action presents two faces: an effect produced by intelligence, and an effect produced by intelligence in, on, or with the body. It is impossible to think of Mind, or Intelligence by itself, without placing ourselves, in conception, outside the world of space; and so we maintain, in analogy with this fact, that the omnipresent God is not imprisoned within nature, but essentially transcends nature. On the other hand, all ordinary unions of mind and body are presented under the form of a connection in space; the correct expression of the passage, whether physical or mental, towards one another, is a change of condition. The Christian may, in connection with this, reflect on the brooding of the Spirit of God over the chaotic abyss (Gen. i. 2). How spirit and matter, essentially distinct, act upon one another is a mystery, but certainly a fact.

It is no explanation to say, "Mind is the sum total of the whole sensitive organism, as life is the sum total of the whole vital organism;" for how can the union in a sum total of such dissimilar things be explained by a word meaning but one sort of them? We may say, with approximate correctness—human consciousness has its synthesis in the sentient continuity of vital conditions; and human mind is that chord, of unknown substance and nature, which brings into synthesis, and renders states of consciousness permanent; but how to explain the essence or manner of the continuity no man findeth.

The truth arrived at is—The essential links of connection between mind and matter cannot be known by any human understanding; therefore, the statement, "that mind, or mental feeling, cannot causally influence an object with which it is not physically connected," is

ultra vires, incapable of proof; and on the whole it seems in accordance with physical science, philosophy, and theology, to hold that all nature is connected with inward spiritual miracles; and that the internal law for human workers of miracles is, that their external miraculous power be in union with inward spiritual operations taking place in their hearts.

Between the overt act of corporeal movement, of which we are cognizant, and the internal act of mental determination, of which we are also cognizant, there intervenes a numerous series of intermediate agencies of which we have no knowledge; and, consequently, we possess no consciousness of any causal connection between the extreme links of the chain—the will to move and the object moved. For example—the actions, thoughts, emotions of past and present generations are so made known to us, by means of language and printing, that we live in the lives of our disembodied and in the lives of our living brethren, and they live in us. Is it possible that the media by which the past is thus retained, and the present made future, have inner vital mental analogies by which our will enters and controls the will of other creatures? We put our will into action, we train a dog, he fetches a bird for us. Our intelligent will acts on, so as to subordinate his instinctive yet receptive nature. These things, themselves inexplicable, afford indications of a process which may extend to the disembodied state; they render scientifically credible real dynamic action by the mind of a prophet, or real action of some other more recondite even divine energy, by which the soul of the dead returns to its bodily dwelling.

Both low and high mental states may and do produce events with which they seem to have no physical connection. There is a will-power in man, an automatism in the lower animals and in nature, by which the biologized subject acts more or less unconsciously; by which the brute is moved by instinct and sometimes against instinct; by which will-force combines at our pleasure with physical force. Take a stone in your hand, if you simply let it go it will fall in a line towards the earth's centre; but you can, before it goes, predict a curve and make it describe that curve ere it reaches the ground. By command of your will-force over physical force you so adjust natural things as to obtain the desired result. Men may talk to you about "eternal conservations, invariabilities, indestructibilities;" but you can confute them and spoil all their theories, within a very wide sphere, whenever you please. You can predict what no other prophet or philosopher is able to foretell, and you can accomplish that prediction which no other finite creature is able to fulfil. You can find men, as to whose moral improvement all hope is abandoned; nevertheless, by the miracles of conversion and regeneration, they are made to partake of the higher life. We may say, "That which gives a miracle its precise distinctive character is, that we cannot point out the natural laws and forces working in it;" indeed, they may all be supernatural, but we know certainly, that faith is one of the media of divine operation in the soul, even as in faith man yields himself to and is blessed by that operation.

The correct scientific conception of the universe is not that of independent parts in aggregation, with the gaps or interstices filled up by arbitrary media; is not

the materialistic notion that mind is an ultimate product of matter ; but that of a totality—something more than the sum of its parts. A systematized unity into every part of which is infused principles of order, proportion, diversity of form, distribution of function, and subordination to a general idea or end. A unity which ever and ever goes out into differences and returns upon itself. The continuous self-differentiation and integration disclosing movements ever manifesting more richness, ever working new and higher conceptiveness and reception. Further—the thought, or intelligence, or action of spirit in nature, without which the world would be unintelligible, and science impossible, continually breaks forth in new and higher expressions of itself. Hence we say—as material phenomena can be observed by the mind, there is no impassable gulf between the two. There is externality, which is at the same time internal—grasped by itself. A spatial outwardness, retracted by inwardness, an indivisible unity subduing and transcending all differences—whether external or internal : so that every part is as if the whole were present. This highly complicate system cannot have origin or explanation by its lowest and meanest factors : the key of the beginning is to be looked for at the end. The lowest and least of the elements only being understood when their prophecy is fulfilled concerning the last and highest. Such a system—far from being alien to mind, is the objective side, the externalization of mind—reveals in every part the action of spirit on matter. This is more plain when we observe that a spiritual, an intelligent being, cannot be shut within its own individuality. It goes wherever there are things

of thought, and rational relations; realizes itself, and approximates more and more to a life unlimited and universal. The universality of these things of thought, or of intelligibility, is that exterior base on which our finite mind builds the certainty of a universality comprehending all: for when we think we do not think merely as individuals, we pass over to a share in a thought or reason that is universal. "The secret ground on which all finite intelligence rests is the consciousness of an Absolute Intelligence" (John Caird, D.D., "Philosophy of Religion," p. 128).

Some men have an experience which leads them to suspect the existence of a strange power, a power of intuitively perceiving what is passing in the mind of another. That which we designate—"thought-reading," may, like some forms of sense-perception, be extraordinarily exalted by intense concentration of attention. Regarding nerve-force as a special force of physical energy, there is no impossibility in such an exertion from a distance as shall bring the brain of one person into direct dynamical communication with the brain of another, without the intermediation of verbal language, or movements of expression. Only great and carefully collected evidence can establish the actuality of such communication; but no man of science has a right to say, "it is impossible." When established, and it appears on the road, who will be able to doubt concerning the action of will, of mind, of spirit, on matter? Christians are sure that there is such a power possessed by the supremely holy. Christ knew what was in men, and gives of His Spirit and life to all who receive Him—"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

We find a spontaneousness in nature by which doing and not doing, permanence and change, rest and motion, birth—life—death in usual, unusual, conflicting manners, are wrought; and these are so far analogous to miracles that, but for experience, we should declare their occurrence impossible; and are so far capable of explanation that we confidently say, "The raising of our present human powers; a greater knowledge, use, and application of nature's forces in their co-ordinations, affinities, and repulsions; would effectuate marvels partly similar to some of the miracles recorded in Holy Scripture." The automatism and spontaneity do not reveal the miraculous process; they are no better than blanks to the common mind, but to the prudent—hieroglyphical of wisest secrets. We know that as religion, without mystery and apart from the Supernatural, would be a temple without God—

> "Excessere omnes, adytis arisque relictis
> Di, quibus imperium hoc steterat;"
>
> VIRGIL, *Æneid*, ii. 351.

so nature, without marvels, would be work without a masterpiece. We are sure of this from the fact, that in Christ the miraculous appears as His true nature. The divine-human love leads us, by the humanity, to the divine internal source. There are other marvels which in Christ partake of the natural, being worked by the power of God in the holy human nature. For example—His reading of thought; and again—not having sinned, it seems natural—as if demanded by His perfection—that He should not see corruption; so His resurrection, one of the greatest miracles, becomes natural as, at the same time, the object of His own will

while wrought by the power of God; He Himself taking His own life again, even as He Himself had laid it down. The power and spirit of this life are for nourishment of God's people in reverence and genial nobleness; that they grow high, be sacred, have wisdom and insight to know that miracles are everywhere, from "the daisy and the heather-bell up unto men."

"Men, my brothers, men, the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do."
TENNYSON.

THOUGHT XIX.

DWARFED MEN.

"O man, born of woman! is there a heart that thinks without pity of thee? Why live long months and years in slow wasting ignominy? Why should the bloom on thy fair face be wasted, the brightness of thine eyes be quenched, and then be stony-pale as one living in death? Has not God called thee to have faith in Him, as His child, and promised that thy foot shall light on happy land, and thy eye brighten in ever-living splendour?" —*From Note-Book.*

CHRISTIANITY is the only religion which possesses internal and external evidence, convincing European intelligence, of having come from God—of being a Supernatural Religion. It is not a system of moral precepts, but a remarkable series of facts, and the only religion in the world which was originated and continued by miracles. Christians rationally accept miracles as that divine evidence and guarantee which render unbelief utterly inexcusable, even as our Lord stated, in reproof of His opponents, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin" (John xv. 24). Butler ("Analogy," Part II. ch. vii.) says, "These miracles are a satisfactory account of those events; of which no other satisfactory account

can be given, nor any account at all, but what is imaginary merely and invented."

When a human being gives up the hopes, marvellous powers, and priceless privilege of immortality; asserts that he is conscious of nothing more than matter and material mechanism in the world; and numbering himself with the lower animals, "Epicuri de grege porcum," says, "We die and are no more seen;" that human being loses the sense of presiding goodness, and the pure trust which brings both peace and joy. His whole life is twisted and overshadowed. He becomes, little by little, dwarfed and blind.

Blind, not discerning the various shades and grades of existence. Blind, not from physical weakness—as those colour-blind persons who discern but few of the beams that light up and glorify the earth, but blind mentally, through neglect of spiritual insight—"Ἡ δ' ἕξις τῷ ὄμματι τούτῳ γίνεται τῆς ψυχῆς, οὐκ ἄνευ ἀρετῆς . . . διαστρέφει γὰρ ἡ μοχθηρία καὶ διαψεύδεσθαι ποιεῖ περὶ τὰς πρακτικὰς ἀρχάς" (Aristotle, "Ethics," vi. 12). That neglect renders him incapable of the far-sighted discernment, that it would be impossible for human beings to create the ideas of God and of Immortality were there not in nature, and in man, signs and tokens of Divinity and Eternity. In the very notion of a self-conscious being is already involved a virtual or potential infinitude.

The man is dwarfed, moreover, with the worst kind of diminishment: intellectual and moral vulgarity cleaves to him "like an hereditary odour:" he is without—or deprives himself of—that God-consciousness, those feelings of awe, those aspirations after holiness, and those yearnings for higher, truer life, which are the

grand attributes of all truly great men. He hinders his own life, and other men's lives from having nobleness in them.

We pursue the thought with a sort of semi-seriousness, reason according to the principles of natural selection, and conduct these intellectual dwarfs, who gladly have it so, to their original irrationality. Little by little, through survival of the fittest, they had acquired, by growth of intelligence, consciousness of God and of future life; but now, not advancing in that consciousness, they lose the intelligence with which it had been acquired. Failures—they see holy things with souls unstirred and unbelieving.

The process of deterioration, which eliminates them from the noble, may thus be traced:—A mind, for any length of time self-limited to the brute sensual range, becomes unable to rise above brute nature:

> "Dem Wurme gleich ich, der den Staub durchwühlt;"
> GOETHE, *Faust*, i.

> "Affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ;"
> HORACE, 2 *Sat.*, ii. 79.

cannot find the path of ascent to that high thought by which Philosophy enters Theology. If there are any human creatures, not thus self-degraded, but really, as they assert, of mere animal birth, these must be regarded as not yet human beings in fulness; not yet possessed with consciousness of God; but lineal and unmixed descendants from the hypothetical brute ancestors of Adam. Otherwise, they manifest a marvellous atavism; are a most interesting and striking example how loss of consciousness, as to God and future life, causes

return to the original stock, notwithstanding the modern advance by natural selection and special culture. We thus scientifically account for the existence, in these days, of men who are gradually becoming extinct, already so far dead as to declare themselves, whether by ancient heredity or of modern production, soulless, utterly incapable of immortality, without sense of divinity.

The incapacity may be otherwise thought of. No brutal or human faculty of perception can, of itself, understand its own essence and nature; much less can lower beings appreciate human nature. Sensitive organs do not understand what perception is, and perceptive organs do not know what intelligence is; the higher power must judge of the lower, the lower is unable to comprehend the higher; and the low can only be put to noble use by means of the high. Some senses, however, are stronger in low cunning beasts than are the analogous loftier in high-gifted man; and mere animal senses appear to be instinctively capable of making gordian knots of fallacies, and of weaving labyrinthine nets, just as birds build nests, or as beasts dig holes to entrap their prey, or as cunning craftiness may prove a bane to nobler natures. "*Δύναμις ἣν καλοῦσι δεινότητα, ἂν μὲν οὖν ὁ σκοπὸς ᾖ φαῦλος, πανουργία ἐστιν*" (Aristotle, "Ethics," vi. 12).

There are amongst these dwarfed ones some, of intellectual attainments, who profess to laugh at Christians. Very often the laugh is not of incredulity, rather a mode of turning their consciousness of spiritual inferiority into a notion or mimicry of superiority, which they insert as consolation between their laughter and the feeling of

inferiority. They know that a life of mere intellect is a life not worth living. "Τὸ τέλος ἐστὶν οὐ γνῶσις, ἀλλὰ πρᾶξις" (Aristotle, "Ethics," i. 3).

A few, however—the very best of them—are sorrowfully conscious that they ought to learn—to live—to teach—a nobler life than that. They know that there are two kingdoms of thought: in one they are to be bold inquirers, critical—even sceptical—reasoners, this is the department of the OBJECT, or object-world; the other is the INFINITE, the unseen, the future, in which they ought to glory as believers, thanksgivers, obeyers, worshippers. These are the truly conscientious, who will be with us so soon as they appreciate what Seneca declared—"Thought breaks through the ramparts of heaven; for it is never satisfied with knowing what is merely set before the senses, but demands the scrutiny of things lying beyond the confines of this world. . . . Nay, we are born to this end."

> "Ergo vivida vis animi pervicit, et extra
> Processit longe flammantia mœnia mundi."
>
> LUCRET., i. 72.

When conscious of their high birthright, that ambition has no loftier aim than the search after immortality, science no triumph more sublime than the conviction that immortality will be gained, they will begin to perceive that the real verities are conclusions from what is given by the senses to what lies beyond sense. Spiritual nature discerns a peculiarity which distinguishes it from the finitude of material nature: a peculiarity that prophesies of the infinitude to which it aspires. True reasoning will lead them onward from things seen to the unseen; and faith, implicit, be given

to things as yet obscure—the result of reason—the necessary complement of observation. They will count it disgraceful to live any longer below those powers of investigation and spiritual insight which constitute the high distinctiveness and excellence of human nature.

By way of mental recreation, think of the twofold process by which those who assert that there are no heavenlies, nothing but what they strike against and touch, and that they are incapable of immortality, trace their own growth: some from vegetal, some from animal germs.

They conceive, as to vegetal germs, that the seed originated from the active conjunction of certain forces of the earth by medium of the sun's radiation. From and by this influx, arose a varied vegetative progression; then, after many ages, multiplying by propagation and advancing from seed to seed; ultimately a shoot appears, which is, as it were, a fœtus; a stem, as it were, a body; branches, as it were, a top or head. New seeds lie stored up in them, they are prolific, concentrate their whole energy and life on rooting in the earth, branching, and fruiting.

The other advance, that from protozoid, begins with the first vital generating plastic forces evoked from the earth, or given, by means of the sun; which then, with diversity not accounted for, pass from vegetal processes into the little granular cells of animal embryos. In some, animal life is persistently protoplasmic, it does not differentiate into various tissues; in others it does, and ascends through sponges, hydras, corals, to the highest radiata. Some form long chains of segments, others are non-segmented—as the snail. Some of the

segmented forms change the position of their mouth, and acquire an unjointed axis which runs through all their segments; besides the little rows of ganglia they have a continuous neural axis, and become vertebrata. Near the top of this group are the Lemurs, above them the Monkeys, at the top Man: it is confidently asserted that *he* sprang from *them* in the direct line of ascent. This seems proved by the strange mixture of stupidity with grotesque cunning discerned in him. George Eliot said (Felix Holt the Radical), "You may tell what he is, and only look at him. There's one sort of fellow sees nothing but the end of his own nose, and another sort that sees nothing but the hinder side of the moon."

The preceding account does not sufficiently or accurately represent the present scientific arrangement of the inferred progression. Take, therefore, in all seriousness, another standpoint.

Consider the present animal kingdom as a large tree, with branches and twigs to the very root, whence it goes down into depths of time and elements invisible.

Let this tree be supposed to have all but its terminal twigs invisible (extinct). In imagination, however, bring it forth to view as a sort of arboreal ghost.

The visible existing forms of life are most numerous, much specialized, and cannot pass the one to the other. There has been a gulf of special difference placed between them.

Trace them back into the tree, and they become fewer, are more and more alike, more generalized: especially so the nearer we come to the great branches which grow out from the main stem.

Examples showing this—the sheep, goat, antelope,

deer, ox, pig, camel, horse, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, elephant—these are modern, specialized, culminating types, with huge highly convoluted brain, many specializations of the digestive organs, and increasing complexity of the tooth-pattern.

All this difference dies out as we descend to the depths of the Tertiary strata. Gradually the brain becomes small, and reptilian, with few convolutions; the tooth-pattern is more and more simple; and the distinction becomes odd-toed, even-toed (with three or four toes more or less developed), and pentadactyle types, disappears: moreover, the horse and ass abort all but the middle toe. The elephant's trunk shortens—ring by ring, the ram and antelope lose their horns, deer have no antlers, and all kinds of the great herbivora approximate to the Tapiroid type now confined to South America and Malaisia.

The above is known fact, and is becoming clearer day by day. North American palæontology is teeming with evidence of this kind, once only known to us by European fossils.

As to the kith of man, the Primates, the lowest types exist mainly in the southern hemisphere—the home of low forms. They have smooth small brains like those of rabbits and guinea-pigs, and are so generalized that they stand in affinity to squirrels and bats, as well as to the higher apes and monkeys. These forms, the Lemurs and Flying Cats, afford no light whatever whereby we can find the supposed human ancestors. They seem, indeed, to be arrested, low forms, of one common stock of the Primates; but that is mere conjecture.

We are not yet ready for more than the most cautious tentative hypothesis. So far from being able to ascend from the monad to man, it is probable that every creature now living has lost all the members of its direct line of ancestry. A friend, W. Kitchen Parker, F.R.S., says, "We may liken the present animal creation to a high staircase: monad the first step, Homo the top one. Homo, however, does not—nor as for that do the others—appear to have gone up obliquely, but vertically; as if the staircase had been constructed perpendicularly, and all the substructure taken away afterwards; for it is all gone." How man rose up in the grand old garden, our science cannot explain. The vaunted statements and drawings of the genealogical tree are mere devices. We must use the most general and elastic language, and not allow sheep, antelopes, monkeys, and men, to run foul of each other genetically. "From some form, possibly nearer to man than any now known, by exaltation and exquisite fashioning of inner relations in adjustment with enlarged and more complicate outer relations, man may have come forth as from sleep—a prodigy" ("The Supernatural in Nature," second edit., p. 136).

Looking down from the height of our ascent, it behoves us not to become dizzy, lest we fall and wallow in a materialistic slough. We are rather to go on rejoicing in our heavenly destiny and gift of immortality. We have waited a whole eternity to be born, and now, being born, a whole eternity waits to see what we will do. Shall we make it a mass of foul loss and disappointment? To the Thinker most of us present tragedy enough. Would that we remember, "la carrière ouverte aux talens," the tools are to him who can handle them.

We are not mere children of the Earth, like Antæus, to sink and die, we are capable of more than that—the heights of bliss and honour. Nature is our step-mother, and she is prodigal enough of gifts: by "scattering from a single oak tree, as provender for pigs, what would plant the whole planet into an oak-forest," she shows, by that prodigality, what superabundance must be the possession of men who are gifted above all other earthly existences. It is time that we rouse ourselves—be true to our great estate, and remember—the real quality of our insight and our strength. Intellect requires faith to complete man, without faith he cannot put to full use all his faculties. Mental strength depends on the faith, lovingness, truth, patience, with which we diligently use our whole man. It is the lamp of God to enlighten the whole man. Without faith, intellect flickers with unsteady light and goes out in darkness. In old time angels came, took men by the hand, and led them from the City of Destruction. Faith, like an unseen angel, now leads men away from fear of evil and of death; puts a hand into theirs, leads them out gently to a good and bright land, and they look no more backward.

THOUGHT XX.

MECHANICAL VIEW OF THE WORLD.

"By sagacious windings and gradual insinuations you may so turn weak understandings that they will turn truth into error; turn fairest sunshine into blackest night, and purest goodness into foulest wickedness."—*From Note-Book.*

"τὸ δρώμενον ἢ πάσχον σῶμά ἐστι."

EPICURUS.

"Facere et fungi nisi corpus nulla potest res."

LUCRET., i. 444.

THE world possesses an endless variety of levers, wheels, cranks, springs: contains within itself an automatism of partially continuative and compensative powers. These do not ensure everlasting continuance; the compensative power is not creative; neither as to the past, nor the future, can we regard the universe as eternal. It is further evident, that it could not call itself into being—begin to act before it had any existence.

The world may be likened to a building, and we can think of the atoms and molecules self-positing themselves; of stone fitting to stone, and buttresses supporting the whole, by means of molecular affinities and repulsions. It is clear, however, that unless we impart something more than mechanical action to the materials

and shade; apart from energy to use them there will be no ocular sight; without some organic principles, some vital, discriminating influx or afflux, there will be no rational sight. There is, therefore, something more in life, in intellect, than solar energy can account for. Take the very lowest view—"Molecular forces determine the form which the solar energy will assume." These molecular forces, separating carbon and oxygen, do, by connection with the organic principle, whatever that may be, build up a cabbage or an oak. In like manner, by reunion of the carbon and of the oxygen, the molecular machinery, worked by organic energy, weaves the texture of a frog, or elaborates the form of a man. The conclusion is, we possess molecular potentialities and manifold organic principles which solar energy is incompetent to explain.

Professor Tyndall stated ("Belfast Address," p. 29), that he discerned in matter "the promise and the potency of every form and quality of life." This, so far as true, may mean that which is taught in Scripture (Gen. i. 11, 20, 24). Probably, the professor would have us understand that the potency is from the Almighty; specially as he states (p. 30), "It is by the operation of an insoluble mystery that life is evolved, species differentiated, and mind unfolded;" but many infer from his words that he considers life and intelligence to be properties of special forms of matter; we, however, cannot understand how he could see the promise and potency of that about which, by his own confession, he knows nothing—or see the germs of the operation and evolution of that which, he confesses, is an "insoluble mystery." In most of these professorial and presidential addresses, the hard words crystallization, fermentation,

germination, mean—"we do not know." It is time for common-sense people to understand that when very clever men say—"Suns resolve themselves into floræ and faunæ, that is, into vegetables and animals"—they only mean that the natural forces used by the Almighty are, so far as physically known, stored in terrestrial and solar sources; but that it is impossible to give an exhaustive account of any one of the changes characteristic of any living thing in nature.

Take the assertion, that without any exercise of Divine Mind, or direction of controlling Intelligence "the grand progression from the inorganic to the organic is by mechanical force," and carry it into practice.

Leave everything to its own so-called natural organizing, continuative, progressive powers. Will crab-stocks grow into apple trees; and the common sloe turn, of itself, into rich varieties of plums? Will the wild rose, by self-planting and automatic progress, attain the delicious fragrance, graceful form, delicate colours, unrivalled beauty, possessed by the queen of flowers? Do our breeders of stock attribute their choice "shorthorns," and "south-downs," to "natural selection"? Will noblemen allow their stud of hunters, or members of the Jockey Club their blood horses, to progress by natural equine development? Certainly not. Nature will not turn the roadster into a racer, and the hack into a hunter, but lead them back to the original stock. Nature does not help the cattle-breeder and feeder by always putting flesh of best quality in the right place, and giving to bone lightest form conjoined with greatest strength. The gardener, by care and skill, planting, grafting, budding, fertilization, use of new seeds, fresh stocks,

seems to find but has still to seek;

> "Durchaus studirt mit heissem Bemühn.
> Da steh' ich nun, ich armer Thor,
> Und bin so klug als wie zuvor;"
>
> GOETHE, *Faust*, i.

makes acquaintance with events, yet does not give them life and organization; and seeking to undo one old riddle—"how things are done"—propounds a hundred new. Knowledge of nature is the handmaid that prepares for wisdom, and, though dwelling on life's lower plains, finds that seed of higher life which wisdom cultures into flower and fruit. Wisdom, by use of knowledge, discerns that every form of being, every movement of life, every action of intelligence, every day of time proceeds through Infinitude, are parts of that mysterious rhythm of existence—of vitality—of mind—of duration—the life-throb of Him who is All in All. By eyesight and insight, wisdom enables willing and capable men to acquire befitting energy for those offices of ministration by which they prepare the weaker brethren for a great future destiny.

The errors of knowledge, apart from wisdom, in forgetting that things

> "Are not what they seem,
> And other than the forms we touch,"

"*τῶν κατὰ ταυτὰ ἐχόντων οὔκ ἐστιν ὅτῳ ποτ' ἄν ἄλλῳ ἐπιλάβοιο ἢ τῷ τῆς διανοίας λογισμῷ, ἀλλ' ἐστιν ἀειδῆ τὰ τοιαῦτα*" (Plato, "Phedo," ch. 63) may be observed in some professedly accurate physical statements.

"When hydrogen and oxygen are mixed in a certain proportion, and an electric spark is passed through them, they disappear, and a quantity of water, equal to the

sum of their weights, appears in their place. . . . Is the case in any way changed when carbonic acid, water, and ammonia disappear, and in their place, under the influence of the pre-existing protoplasm, an equivalent weight of the matter of life makes its appearance? . . . If the properties of water may be properly said to result from the nature and disposition of its compound molecules, I can find no intelligible ground for refusing to say that the properties of protoplasm result from the nature and disposition of its molecules."

This professes to be a thorough and an accurate statement, as to water and protoplasm, which we are bound to accept—"if scientific language is to possess a definite and constant signification." We maintain the opposite: it is inaccurate and unscientific. The properties of water do not result merely from the nature and disposition of hydrogen and oxygen; but from an alteration in the nature and disposition of hydrogen and oxygen, and by the gift of new properties, effected by the passing through of an electric spark.

Error lies in the statement as to protoplasm. Carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, do not produce life by the nature and disposition of their molecules; nor do they ever produce an equivalent weight of the matter of life—the matter of life is a very much more complicate substance. Combine these elements in any way that science directs, they remain dead, not the least life is in them. So far from possessing life—carbonic acid, water, ammonia, cannot, by any process that we are acquainted with, be made into protoplasm; and, if made, would be as far from life as the earth is from the sun; for protoplasm is never made to live without the action

of pre-existent life. Every living organism possesses mechanical relations, those called chemical, and the vital: without the vital, no organism can exist.

That many germs of wholly different natures are within the essential unity of all life is established by the fact that the life substance, even when microscopically viewed, seems the same for all. It is also known that as germs become organisms, the use of an organ may account for its modification, not its origin: for it cannot be used until it is formed. It is further known that many animals possess organs and peculiarities which are rather a hindrance than an advantage in the struggle for existence. These facts prove that Natural Selection, though exercising great influence, does not explain the origin, nor account for all the varieties in life. This knowledge has not yet brought wisdom: for some among us believe that, though Nature is unable to make large leaps, create new matter, new force, new creatures, she can do the impossible by means of little jumps.

Endeavour to arrange well-considered facts in such manner that by aid of wisdom you may ascertain the true life-plan.

Spontaneous generation of life is not within scientific range.

Life did not exist in the earth while the elements were in a gaseous state, nor could life, as now known, exist when the metals were fused; nor could a cooling planet—simply because it was cooling—make a cell or tiny house for life's first habitation. It is not in the power of time to enable nothing to turn into something; nor is infinitude wide enough, apart from life somewhere, to find a place in which dead matter may, spontane-

ously, begin to live, turn round, and clothe itself with intelligence.

We have no evidence, direct or indirect, of spontaneous generation; that the dead, of itself, ever became living. Even if protoplasm (a compound of C H N O and sulphur) could be produced by synthesis; it would not be alive, nor possess the powers of living protoplasm. The law of science being that mechanical variability is a lessening quantity; and the principle of equivalency of forces having been firmly established by Dr. Joule and other eminent investigators; we are sure that no effect can transcend its cause, nor the small contain the great, nor the dead give birth to life, nor unreason evoke intelligence. No one possessing the least knowledge of science will deny the existence of a Universal First Cause, the original source of every phenomenon, whether good or evil: therefore, of life.

The First Cause, some time or other, did infuse life into dead matter; and now, in the comparatively short space of twenty years, man is developed from a mere speck of albuminous substance. Dead matter—some inorganic, some organic—taken as food and air, becomes, in a few hours, part of a woman's living structure. Then part of an embryo child; and the child, by further assimilation of dead material, becomes in a few years a full-grown human being. Lamarck, studying the animals called invertebrate (because they have no backbone), was led by their many similarities to regard them, not as separate creations, but as differentiations effected during a long series of ages from a few simple forms. Thence he inferred, that the many systems and series of living things are of one parent stem and

a First Cause: something out of time, yet followed by time; standing at the beginning of all duration and succession, having no antecedent, but possessing a series of consequents. If we deny this and say, "All things are One, the universe is unique—self-existent;" then comes the reply, "No one thing, nor any number of things, so far as we know, is self-existent; and as the whole contains no more than all its parts, the universe, as a whole, cannot be self-existent seeing that it is not so in any of its parts." We cannot know the manner in which the Unconditioned, that is the Infinite, is a Person; but wisdom, judging from our own personality, will, and conscience, apprehends personality in finite extension, and omniscient wisdom could infinitely extend that knowledge. Every known thing being derivative, our personality, will, and conscience spring from a prior personality, will, and conscience. Science affords illustrations—Chemical units combine into units vastly complex, the complex unity contains more than the mechanical bringing together of the component parts. Physiological units, formed by these complex chemical units, possess special—distinctive—and more power than the chemical units, and proceed to the composition of separate organisms. Rock crystal on one side, and vegetable organism on the other; animal sensation here, and human intelligence there; life weaving all things that live, intelligence guiding all that think; condensation of gas and vapour into fluid and solid—assuming scores of shapes, moving to and fro; are all and every, even the smallest, as if by appointment of reason to their place. This wonderful and universal operation, as if by reason, leads us, by true analogy, to infer with

certainty that Intelligence holds the same relation in the universe that it assumes in us.

The materialist does not adequately discern this; and, though the qualities of matter and mind are the antipodes of one another, he speaks of them "as one substance with two sets of properties, two sides, the physical and the mental, a double-faced unity." Whereas, we really begin, and are forced to begin, our every investigation by means of thought. We pass by irresistible necessity from process to process, and when we arrive at the goal—the sphere of universal essential truth—it is not inert, nor deaf, nor unintelligent, not a series of discrete atoms, not "fact minus mind;" but that Infinite Mighty Intelligence, the source and explanation of all. "If any one had said to Newton"—we use the words of Augustus de Morgan ("Budget of Paradoxes," p. 92)—"'I hold that every particle of matter is a responsible being of vast intellect, ordered by the Creator to move as it would do if every other particle attracted it, and gifted with power to make its way in true accordance with that law, as easily as a lady picks her way across the street: what have you to say against it?' Newton must have replied, 'Sir! if you really undertake to maintain this as *demonstrable*, your soul had better borrow a little power from the particles of which your body is made: if you merely ask me to refute it, I tell you I neither can nor need do it; for whether attraction comes in this way or in any other, *it comes*, and that is all I have to do with it.'"

We cannot speak of thought and emotion, pleasure and pain, as if inertia, form, outline, division of parts, belonged to them; there cannot coinhere in the same

substance extension and absence of extension, inertia and the absence of inertia, colour—form—and the absence of colour and form; yet the materialist believes the be and not be at the same time, and in the same sense. To him the horse and the rider are identical. The materialist is, and cannot help being, an unconscious metaphysician and spiritualist. Those to whom wisdom has come, regard the crawling caterpillar—now it is a chrysalis, in a little while it is a beautiful butterfly; it is the same being, yet not the same; and they see that men remain the same beings despite many bodily changes. The butterfly, chrysalis, caterpillar, are productions of partly visible and partly invisible process; our own change is mostly invisible—but we are conscious that all things are woven by something not themselves, and linked to the transcendental; we are possessed with an assurance that the process is wrought by "Ein wechselnd Weben" (Goethe, "Faust"), One Most Wonderful.

Knowledge, being superficial apart from wisdom, errs as to sensation and mental activity—pretends that they are wholly wrought by physical changes; though the mysterious operation which translates material vibrations into sensation, intelligence, emotion, is inscrutable; even as is the way in which light produces chemical change, and chemical change excites nerve-force. All that we discern is a succession of sequences; nevertheless, materialists argue that as the sensation of light generally, except in cases of blindness, follows the formation of a luminous image on the retinæ; and as the sensation of hearing generally, except in cases of deafness, is a consequence of pulsation on the auditory nerves; sensa-

tion is essentially material, and all following stages of mental activity are material. Hence, the translations of physical vibrations by means of physiological instrumentality, concerning either of which nothing is known beyond the fact of antecedent and consequent, are to be taken, so materialists affirm, as the explanation of something altogether different. They are not an explanation: for it is not the ear that hears, nor the eye that sees, but the intellect which uses them as instruments. Intellect is not the mechanism which it uses, sensation is not the antecedent pulsation, but things added thereto; man is not the machine by which he works, nor is time a mere watch with which time is measured. The constant, amidst all variables in ourselves, is the spiritual and conscious self: not in this or that flux of impressions or ideas, but common to all: that to which each is referred, that which brings each and both into the unity of thought. That, moreover, which gives intelligible reality and unity to the outer world; which co-ordinates atoms and molecules to display inorganic, organic, vital, mental forces; which demand from our intelligence higher and higher thought for their comprehension; presupposes the existence of Mind.

The forces of the outer and inner worlds, of physical and mental states, possess correlation, but are not identical. In the external and inner worlds are perpetual changes of which we can discover neither beginning nor end. "Κινεῖται καὶ ρεῖ τὰ πάντα" (Plato, "Theætet"); Nought may endure but mutability. Speaking is not thought, nor is thought matter: though it rests on a material base. Mental analysis may bring us down to sensation, as something nearer to the interior and exterior out of

which thought is woven; but that does not explain either. We cannot in the least comprehend even sensation, nor conceive how sensation renders thought possible. Two things may conjoin as to succession, yet one is not as the other: they may be far apart as life from death, as action from repose, as day from night. There may be appearances, we see not; no appearances, and we see. The blind, as to natural sight, see in their dreams; and some, whose organs of sense are torpid or dead, are, at times, quick to perceive and know.

"εὕδουσα γὰρ φρὴν ὄμμασιν λαμπρύνεται."
ÆSCHYLUS, *Eum.*, 104.

"ὁρῶντα λαμπρὸν ἐν σκότῳ."
ÆSCHYLUS, *Chœph.*, 280.

"En animam et mentem cum qua Dii nocte loquantur."

Some materialists pretend that the phenomena observed in a living thing, or in living matter, can be explained by known laws; they know that such explanation does not account for the changes characteristic of any one living thing. They cannot throw any light whatever upon the cause of the vibration of a single cilium, cannot imitate the phenomena which occur in the simplest living form.

We may obtain higher thoughts.

Consider Life, not as a watch, nor as any mere mechanism, dissipating the energy contained in a coiled spring. Every even the smallest part of the living creature uses its own little store of energy, and is constantly replenished from external sources which are drawn upon by the arrangements and harmonious work-

ing of the whole organism. Make, in your imagination, a duck like that of Vaucanson—to walk, to fly, to partake of food. Let every part be microscopically constructed. You are very far from the living reality—its instinct, its portion of intelligence, its hidden vitality, are utterly unattainable. Vain is the hope of the student—

> "Dass ich erkenue, was die Welt
> Im innerohn zusammenhält,
> Schau' alle Wirkerskraft und Samen,
> Und thu' nicht mehr in Worten kramen."
>
> GOETHE, *Faust*, i.

If you think further, you will find that we are acquainted with less than a dozen of the forms of energy manifested by elementary substances. These energies are partially, if not wholly, convertible into one another; but their effects are not like the cause; and, though correlative, human skill is not able, by synthesis of effects, to reproduce the cause; indeed, no known process of nature is exactly and completely reversible. The Ultimate Cause is that mysterious Energy, the Cause of all matter and existence, the Unity, in whom we live and move and have our being. Unity is not less incomprehensible than are variety and infinity. On a graduated scale there can be as many divisions between unity and nothing, as between unity and infinity. Call your own degree of consciousness unity: there may be as many existing different degrees below your own, as there are above it, rising to the most exalted mind. Raise your eyes to heaven, contemplate the earth, consider how the separate parts of the universe have been brought together, recall their origin, figure to yourself what they were till regulated in harmonious order, reflect on the

name itself, Cosmos, which means order, ornament, beauty, and remember—

> "From Harmony, from Heavenly Harmony,
> This universal Frame began."
>
> DRYDEN.

Those who assert that there are no miracles, and certainly none nowadays, do but babble. Matter is full of miracles, life is full of miracles, mind is full of miracles, and within the minutest atom is an inner world, beautiful, wonderful, infinitesimal, revealing the great surrounding spheres—"πολλὰ τὰ δεινά" (Sophocles, "Antig.," 332).

The inorganic substance, when life enters, is built up into the plant. The organic substance, when intelligence enters, is woven into animal texture. The blending of matter, of life, of intelligence, is a wonderful trinity; and in man the three are one. His frame contains material substance, life-energy, mental principle, a trinity of being. Let him who has wisdom carry this trinity to its types in the Eternal Essence. Think that there are three moments of development: the objective presentment, or embodiment; the differentiation into manifold complex forms; the carrying these into co-ordination, or correspondence, with the perfection of the Organizer. Presentment, or embodiment, is the bringing into existence the elements of the universe. Differentiation affords the possibility, where freedom exists, of aberration or divergence. The co-ordination is not only a Redemption, but an Elevation, or Sanctifying of differentiated things, into higher and higher being continually. These stages are evidence of purpose—a beginning and a contemplated end. Omnipotence and Omniscience so planned the creation, continuance, and progress of beings

and existences, that from rudest elements, lowest life, least intelligence, there should be a marvellous elevation. By this arrangement, every intelligent, responsible individual, while tasting precious life, is enabled to render it more precious by that conscious voluntary co-operation with the Eternal, by which he even partakes of the Divine Nature (John i. 12). "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33).

Pass from thousands of molecular and nervous fibres, thousands of blood-vessels, thousands of co-operations in the lungs—in the heart—in the brain—in the spinal cord; from action to sensation, from sensation to mental process, from mental process to spiritual capacity—to the inner man, which makes man to be himself. You perceive, by careful observation, that the impressions made by outward material things are not the only bases of sensation, perception, remembrance. Known processes take place in the world which, like the material elements of which it is composed, are too subtle to be apprehended by sensation. Knowledge, or what is taken for knowledge, soon passes beyond the data of perception. Molecular motions are no more the essence of thought than of life. We know that life evokes the organism, not the organism life, to be a home of use and beauty. We further know that our essential self, the ego, or inner man, by use of the splendid machine built by life, fashions itself and is fashioned by the indwelt organism and its surroundings. The essence of mind must be referred to objects which may be thought of, but whose real nature we can neither perceive

nor imagine. All that science knows is—mind in the germ is that from which mind springs.

The properties and operations of matter being known as external to us, the faculties and acts of the mind being known as internal, we are conscious of the outer and the inner. Our knowledge is compounded of two elements: one contributed by the object known, the other by the mind knowing. How the physical processes are connected with consciousness, or in what way perceiving organisms were evolved in or from a world which was in itself neither perceiving nor perceived, we cannot say; but we are sure that the constitution of human nature —particularly as to high operations of intellect and emotion, recollection and expectation—rests on something permanent; on organic unity, continuous as the thread of a necklace and steady in the horizon of existence as the rainbow—though the drops of rain ever and rapidly change their position. Proof is afforded by the fact, that perception, as a relation between mind and matter, necessarily implies the presence of both: each being modified by its contact with the other.

"My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky!
So was it, when my life began;
So is it, now I am a man;
So let it be, when I grow old,
Or let me die.
The child is father of the man,
And I would wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety."

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

By means of this permanency, continued consciousness of our own identity, we establish a connection with

other states and modes of being. The following facts are offered as simply suggestive. In the human frame we possess network within network. Every web of tissues, taken separately, represents the human form: place by itself the bony structure; then the muscular portion; apart and by themselves, in order, the veins and arteries, with the white form of nerves held up; more real than the bony mechanism, than the muscular anatomy, than the ghost of nervous structure, is the invisible inner man of all. This inner and outer man, the spirit and body, acting in diversity and in unity, evolving thought by complicity of organs and dual distribution, from side to side, to and from the nervous centres, prove that there is no irrational gap or breach of continuity between one class of forces and another, between the inorganic and organic, between the low and high forms of life; but a succession of elastic concatenated media extending to self-conscious mind. By these media our implicit capacity of self-development, physical and mental, becomes explicit in the perfect man—they are the unknown by which we know. Hence, our capacity of knowing is not the measure of belief, nor the limit of existence. It is that by which we intelligently discern beings of whose nature we are utterly ignorant. It is that by which we think we are aware of nothing in the universe foreign or alien to thought. It is that by which we think Supreme Mind claims everything as actually or virtually its own.

This inner conception of the world's mental and essential unity, is supported by external analogy found in the world's material unity—by the existence of an all-pervading substance, æther; the medium of light and

heat, perhaps of gravitation, magnetism, electricity; one of the most subtle and universal elements of the universe—

"Ætherium sensum atque aurai simplicis ignem."

Without it, we should not see—nor be warmed—the sun's light and heat would be in vain. This æther is not the air which we breathe, but is in it, pervades every part of our body—and, in all things, it contains all things. The vehicle by which God—unmeasured by ages, nor moving along with times—personally acts. It helps our conception as to the manner in which God's Personality may be unlimited; and how the unconditioned may be so conditioned that the Divine Nature assumes the human.

Our nerves of sensation, by some called "positive," and the nerves of motion, "negative," are an inner electric telegraph, with subtle fluid-affluent or influent, which connect and inform the whole man, and prove that we cannot escape from mystery by rejecting Revelation. Suppose that gravity is the intervening medium of all worlds and of all things; we obtain foundation for thought that at some distant time we may know the correlation of physical force and mental emotion, of Divine Will and human responsibility. Meanwhile, we are content to know that the natural and Supernatural, man and God, matter and Spirit, will some day be brought into beautiful, wonderful accord! At present, the objects perceived by our senses are, as Plato said, like shadows thrown by fire on the wall of a cave; but we shall, ere long, see our God as He is, and know as we are known (1 John iii. 2). Eternity contains an infinity of transitions from home to home,

ever to fairer scenes, ever to loftier heights, adding knowledge to knowledge, and wisdom to wisdom, as we ascend from glory to glory, from heaven to heaven; until like S. Paul, we behold that which cannot be uttered—

> " . . . l'eterna luce
> Chi vista sola sempre amore accende."
>
> DANTE, *Paradiso*, canto v.

It is our privilege now to prepare for that wonderful state in which these high things will be subjects of daily experience, and the secret things of God be articulated. Oh for that wisdom to know how God is everywhere—wholly everywhere, that Present where can be neither past nor future; how Revelation and Miracle are words and works to teach of Him who, apart from time, creates time; who, without beginning, forms all duration and succession; who, having no antecedent and no consequent, creates all consequents!

THOUGHT XXII.

HUMAN-WISE.

"Whatever it may be for which man feels his combination of love, trust and awe, carried to the highest limits of which his nature is capable; this, and nothing else, is the object of his highest worship."—EDWIN A. ABBOTT, D.D.

"Comparatio enim terrenorum ad Deum nulla est; sed infirmitas nostræ intelligentiæ cogit species quandam ex inferioribus, tanquam superiorum indices quærere; ut rerum familiarium consuetudine admovente, ex sensus nostri conscientia ad insoliti sensus opinionem educeremur."—HILARY, *De Trin.*, i. 19.

SOME of the irreligious, happily, are wearied with the miseries of their dismal science. They break in upon physical studies by some nobler inquiries, and find the interruption no hindrance. They act upon Lord Bacon's direction—"Let not a man force a habit upon himself with a perpetual continuance: but with some intermission. For both the pause reinforceth the new onset; and if a man that is not perfect be ever in practice, he shall as well practise his errors as his abilities." These honest inquirers are told by those less in earnest—"To speak of God as were He a Person is anthropomorphic; and to believe in miracles renders nature imperfect, as if it needed adjustment."

Such language produces a deterrent effect even upon

intelligent persons. We, therefore, show that our opponents, refusing true anthropomorphism, fall into the low and wrong.

False anthropomorphism likens nature to a building, or to a tree, or to a machine; as if nature's work, God's work, was not higher, better, more than any of these. To be rid of a divine beginning, it asserts—"There never was a beginning, only transformations of motion," expressed in Greek—"γένεσις οὐδὲν ἄλλο, εἰ μὴ ἀλλοίωσις φορᾶς," as if this were not babble mainly. The miseries of men and groanings of creation, noxious animals and all evil things, are paraded with the intent that sacredness be taken from the pathos of our life, and awe from our silent death. "Such a desire, expressed by the Epicurean poet, Lucretius, may have been an enthusiasm against superstition, and an honest zeal against idols, though even then the remedy was worse than the disease; and it were better to believe all the fables in the Talmud than that this universal frame is without a Divine Mind; and they that so believe, or pretend so to believe, now that the gospel has been preached, are surely without excuse?" We cannot even see the summer gloaming steal over the moorland, nor receive light from the pleasant skies when the air holds a solemn stillness, without in some degree getting pious profit, if we face them solemnly.

The low sort of anthropomorphism, takes the outer form, the material organism, and counts it the whole man; forgets or denies the inner principle—from which the outer grew; is unmindful of the mystic person—which extracted the material person from outer substances; takes that clothing which life assumes in pro-

gress from the inorganic to the organic, from plant to beast of the field, from beast of the field to man, as were that clothing and the putting of it on—life itself. The professors of this system do not discern the difference between the plastic principle and plastic materials; between the invisible building power and the house it builds; they confound the thousands of muscular fibres, thousands of nervous fibres, thousands of blood-vessels, thousands of operations in lungs, heart, brain, spinal cord, with the essentiality of a human being.

No wonder that the God of such a system is no God, is nothing apart from the world; as man, so they represent, is nothing apart from the body. They liken God —not to a Ruler, but to the forces of matter—to matter itself; not to a Person, our highest possible conception of being and existence, but to space in which matter moves. This is low indeed.

By way of amendment, they put forth an amusing dogma. "There is somewhere in the world a maximum finite brain, a highest finite intelligence—or else several, all equal." This is the clearest and sublimest of all their verities: "there is somewhere at this present moment in our planet, or in some other habitable orb, the very highest intelligence and will in the universe; but it is impossible to know who he is, and he most assuredly cannot know that the crown is on his head." So they construct a non-natural man, drop out all they account weakness, insert all that they deem strong. This magnified man they worship. Shall we Christians be ashamed of the true God-man, Christ, who was, is, and ever will be first? Is not Christ better than their greatest biologist, and most prodigious physicist?

True anthropomorphism does not make a graven image of matter, erect it in space, move it with force, and say to men, "Behold thy god! see how he moves within his habitation." Those who hold true doctrine, know that materialism, whether it appear in the old Egyptian form, so that men worship a beetle; or in sensuous modern glorifying of "La Madre Natura;" is a degrading idolatry. The worship of Cybele, Ceres, Rhea, Ops, Vesta, Bona Mater, Magna Mater, Tellus, Demeter, was the most debasing of all pagan worship. True anthropomorphism, as opposed to this, is a good thing. All true science, as anthropomorphic. We know nature by means of our own nature, and it cannot be otherwise. Things are not known as they are in themselves, but as represented to us by our senses. We know the Divine Nature, not in itself, but through analogous qualities in the creature. The one Absolute Existence, to which philosophy aspires, is represented by our consciousness, by our moral and religious feelings, as a Personal God. In what other way do our opponents know, or not know of Him, than in analogy of the human with the Divine Nature? "Dieu se définit par la substance de l'être" (Lacordaire, "Prem. Conf. de Toulouse"). Surely they have some craving after God; it is the craving of humanity, the world-wide consciousness of relationship between Heaven and Earth. We do right to erect in our heart an image of the Divine Person —not of the ancients' best Parian, nor of ivory, nor of gold, nor of the materialist's coarser grit, on a pedestal; but a spiritual image of truth, justice, wisdom, love, might. This image of the Wonderful renders our whole body a temple—the spirit an inner shrine—and the silent

worship is very gladsome, yet solemn in reverence of God enthroned in Eternity, established in Omnipotence, the conscious Ruler of whatsoever is.*

Christ, the highest example of Holy Worship, wonderfully taught us of it; and now Himself receives it. He, by the power of a divine-human nature, the Personality in God allying itself with our personality in Christ, evokes faith, inspires words, creates deeds, gives endurance, renders men sublime. Confessors—maligned by emperors and princes; martyrs—suffering in the flames, torn of wild beasts, tormented by a multitude; were dauntless though alone against the world, and prevailed over every foe. Generations and generations have gone to rest, comforted by the hope of heavenly bliss, their every pleasure a foretaste, their every pain an assurance of glory. Heroic lives, of valiant daring and wonderful performance for the Almighty, knew that they should find more and better than all they looked for. It will be long, indeed, before a list like that in Heb. xi. will be given of godless men, every verse beginning—"Scepticism is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"—but now, even the weary and sad, the widow and orphan, the weak and those for whom no man cares, know that, by the help of Jesus, they shall find their way to a blessed land. This is true anthropomorphism; the moral, the spiritual, the heavenly, the earthly, bound together in Christ; miraculous in its

* Tirinus on Exod. iii. 14: "Nomen proprium discriminans nullam habeo, sed quod generalissimum est Ens seu Esse, mihi uni revera proprium, nam Ego solus ex me ipso seu vi mea solius essentiæ sum; ac perinde necessario et essentialiter, et infinite et illimitate idque ab æterno et immutabiliter; a quo et ex quo, tanquam immenso essentiæ polo et primo essendi principio omnia creata entia promanadunt."

source, and in its effects. By it we enter new regions of thought; old truths take glorious wrappings, higher life evermore grows in gladness; we are transported to a heavenly sphere, and enriched with the treasures of God.

We might leave our thought as sufficiently expressed; but the error is so common of regarding personality and infinity as words expressing incompatible ideas, that we must state plainly: Personality and Infinity are compatible ideas. Ps. cxxxix. combines the two ideas in a natural yet supernatural manner. God, as manifesting Himself in man, in a rich and powerful nature, in mighty world-events, cannot be regarded as separable from Intelligence; and by intelligence we are percipient and recipient of Divinity. Our capacity of thought is not the measure of His existence; but we are sure that Divine Intelligence contains the power of self-consciousness, of self-determination, of self-possession; regards Himself as one and the same for ever and ever; this is Personality.

Personality is the highest form of being. The essential elements of it are existence, consciousness of this existence, and control over it. The question is not whether the creature is a measure of the Creator, but the fact is that we must think of God by analogy and experience of our own mind—immeasurably inferior, not essentially different. From what is best in ourselves we must reason on infinitely. The laws of the universe are an expression of divine thought and working, and by analogical working of our own mind we attain the highest possible definition of the Supreme—a Person,

Unknowable, "Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ" (Acts xvii. 23) in His essence, known in and by His manifestations. "Deo nihil secretius, nihil presentius" (S. Augustine). Dwelling in man, but transcending thought; within nature, but not by nature contained. The Incomprehensible of the Athanasian Creed, *Immensus* in the original Latin. We attain a true solution by apprehending the human and finite, possessing at once distinctness and unity, as members of an organic whole, comprehended by the Infinite and Divine. We go forth into the still night, and regard some fixed and distant star; we reckon the millions and millions and millions of miles, and as we reckon the distance recedes further and further; it is unapproachable, it is immeasurable; yet this far-off star affords us light and friendly presence, we are glad in the brightness. In like manner our Holy God is present in innumerable blessings, near as if we embraced Him in every lovable object, "fruiturque Deorum colloquio" (Virgil, "Æneid," vii. 90); we live in Him, move in Him, are encircled by His arms, and breathed in by His Spirit; yet He remains ever that Star, that Sun, immeasurably beyond us, unto whom for ever and ever we nearer and nearer approach—passing from mystery to mystery.

> "Death! there is not any Death; only infinite change,
> Only a place of life which is novel and strange,
> * * * * *
> Life following life for ever."
>
> *The Ode of Life.*

THOUGHT XXIII.

LAW WITHIN THE LAW.

"A key is out of relation, either to the inside or outside taken separately out of the enclosure which it opens; but it is in relation to both taken together as being the instrument of admission from the one to the other. Take any tool or implement of art, handicraft, or husbandry, and look at it by itself; what an eccentric and unmeaning thing it is! wholly out of order and place, but it is in exact order and place as the medium between the workman and the material—and a miracle is in perfect order and place as the medium between two worlds."—J. B. MOZLEY, D.D.

WE endeavour, in a spirit of true anthropomorphism, to arrive at a conception of Divine Personal Government —of that infinite all-embracing Intelligence after whom all our aspirations crave, this Government affording the only rational ground for our belief in supernatural interference.

Government and state are of two kinds: one corresponding to space, one corresponding to time. The state corresponding to space is Being. That which corresponds to time is Existence. The Infinite represents the Divine in Being. The Eternal represents the Divine in Existence. Both terms are to be understood in a supreme sense: apart from space and apart from time. Gregory Nyssen says of the Divine Nature, "It is neither in place nor in time, but before these and above

these in an unspeakable manner." Kant says, "The existence of a Cause of all nature, distinct from nature which Cause contains the ground of the exact harmony of happiness with morality, is postulated."

Nature is the recipient of space or extension—that is Being; and the recipient of time—that is Existence. Everything in nature is and exists by an immaterial principle—Intelligence, law within the law. This we know because science finds nature of essentially rational order, system, and coherent relations. Men are beings—that is, constituted for space; and are existences—that is, constituted as to time. Nature is what appears. The law within the law is that which essentially is. Without going minutely into difficulties as to what appears and what is, observe nature from its cognitive or mental side. It gives the idea, on one hand, of a Material Universe, on the other of Mind. Kant says, "It seems at first surprising, but is not the less certain, that the understanding does not draw its laws *a priori* from nature, but prescribes them to it."

How is government, how are these various yet similar states, maintained? By energies in the atoms which constitute the solid, liquid, and gaseous bodies scattered through space; energies diversely modified in the forces of nature. Take one modification of force—Mechanism: it is an attribute of every entity endowed with figure and space; it is inseparable from every individual and compound—whether at rest or in motion; and is inseparable, so far as we can see, from motion itself. The outward beginning of mechanism is the first stroke, but the real origin is prior to that—the creative ideal of the perfect work. There is a sense in which the end is

the real beginning, the universal not last but first: "γνωριμώτερον φύσει-ἀρχή." The potentiality by which one piece of matter becomes wheat or oats, fruit or flower, is to be found in that silent dominating principle which rules the beginning and every successive stage of outward and inward history.

The science of mechanism, applied to the universe, is geometry and astronomy. By these we follow nature from the first origin—seed—egg—to the greatest dimensions: including the indefinitely large, or the indescribably small; a world in a particle, a particle in a world, or world within world. It is well to remind the reader, that the world is really very unlike all that we actually perceive, or can represent by imagination. When astronomers talk of the moon, and chemists of elementary substances, they mean the things we see and touch; but when they speak of the real or essential structure of these bodies, they are compelled to use words which have only a symbolical meaning, and refer to things whose nature, such as our senses acquaint us with, cannot be either perceived or imagined.

We find the same parts and elements, but infinitely varied, in a particle and in the all-embracing heaven. There is in the densest and purest substances an æthereal influx; and consciousness, by other or similar media, sensational, mental, emotional, acts along and through vibratory motions; and excites those volitions of which we are conscious when we put forth power. That the things which we see with our eyes and touch with our hands really exist, we are sure; but we only know them by our own ideas and sensations, which represent them as they seem, not as they really are. There is within

us and within the world around something permanent in the midst of change, something outside our consciousness and outside the world, yet acting on both.

Thus we obtain some approximate conception of influence by means of volition on matter; and, we speak reverently, possibly of the means used in divine operation; and of the media uniting states and places, solar vortices and starry heavens. It is as if by study of lowly hovels we ascended to palaces of the sky; from influences, acting in earthly dust, traced the knitting of the stupendous arch of heaven, the rearing of magnificent courts; and knew how God studs the vast expanded dome with many stars, "stellis ardentibus aptum" and in exuberance of love enriches and beautifies our earth.

> "Tum pater omnipotens fecundis imbribus Æther
> Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit, et omnes
> Magnus alit, magno commixtus corpore, fetus."
>
> VIRGIL, *Georg.* ii. 325.

These æthereal media, or whatever we may ultimately find them, are of various gradations and operation. They are interior and exterior; dependent and independent; like magnetism—negative and positive; and their maintenance, if physical, is probably by atomic and molecular repulsions and attractions. For sake of definiteness, if definiteness be desirable, think of Evolution in one of its aspects—"Form." Everything is called a "thing" on account of its form, so says Aristotle —"*τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι.*" By means of the form of an entity we understand that it is of a peculiar genus or species, and why it is of one quality rather than another; consequently we may say, "The law is contained in the

form;" and form is perceived by our educated sense of sight.

There are forms of other substances which are only mentally discerned in our fashioning of images abstractedly from matter. In higher sense, Form means the universe: as containing all and everything within its embrace. In highest sense, Form means God: so says S. Augustine, "Forma aliqua est æterna et incommutabilis per quam cuncta formantur;" and again, "Forma quædam non formata Verbum Dei, forma sine tempore et loco." In other words—the eternal reality as distinguished from surface forms and vanishing semblances: the One by, in, and for whom all have being and exist. Barrow enumerates among forms and modes of being and operation far above our reach—"God's eternity without succession," and couples with it "His prescience without necessitation of events" ("Sermon on the Unsearchableness of God's Judgments"). When the eye is wearied with seeing, the ear with hearing, and the imagination with the effort to gather all the scattered glories of the world into one vision of material splendour, we feel, we know, that beyond all we see, and hear, and seek, is something ineffably greater.

Speaking of forms generally, we say of every natural substance, it is a system of internal and external qualities. Living form is built up outwardly by action from within; and, as it must stop somewhere, the different points at which it stops, as it communicates different and peculiar figures, are the limits of its evolution. To attain adequate knowledge of all forms, we must retrace the whole past history of the object, see that which is in the light of that which has been, how the

particular stands to the universal, and, as to man, mark the consciousness going from itself to find that universal Mind or Intelligence which is the prius and unity of all.

The true character of every natural and specific figure gives it not merely surface but bounds: bounds to which the internal essence and outer environment extend—arrival at which is termination. Consequently, Form is the definition or ὅρος, that outward universal signature by which Nature denotes and limits her several productions; the obvious test by which we know this to be a vegetable, that an oak, the other an animal; the essential determination, or fluxion, or coincidence, of parts—points—substances—forces. Behind and beyond all the forms is the hidden reality, the world as it is in itself, not the hard antithesis, but the reflection of mind, that in which mind sees itself.

By cultivation we raise our mind above the ideas which take form and quantity from space and time, and acquire intellectual and emotional relish for things spiritual and divine. Every man is able to think in a sphere above that of sensational nature, and does so think. It is of the very essence of man, as a spiritual being, to transcend the finite, to seek after and rest in an infinite unity of thought and being. The organic processes of this mental development are exquisitely delicate. Taking the outer and mechanical basis of them, the thickness of a nerve-fibre may be taken as 1-1200th part of a line; central fibres are incomparably finer, and in a single square inch of the brain are packed about six millions of such fibres. By this basis of mysterious organization, fine material relations and disposition of filaments, we are capable of advancing mental

and emotional relations into a high sphere of spiritual activities. Our mind is not merely a passive recipient, it adds to its own proper cognitions, and, both in science and religion, believes articulately much that it is impossible fully to conceive. By skilful persistent development, we perform operations which we cannot unravel: impenetrable as to physics, not as to our consciousness. These nebulæ in the sky of our intellect, which we cannot at present resolve, are indications of far-off worlds and processes yet to be revealed. "Il n'y a donc aucune loi sensible qui n'ait derrière elle (passez moi cette expression ridicule) une loi spirituelle dont la première n'est que l'expression visible" ("Les Soirées de St. Petersbourg," x. entretien). By a reverse degenerate diminishment, we distort our faculties, the beams or ideas of truth are not reflected according to their true incidence, and our mind, like an enchanted glass, is full of imposture.

Other thoughts, as to Law within the Law, can be put into more simple shape.

The anatomist concludes that every bone found in the rocks served a purpose; and, by examination of the bone, he attains knowledge of the size, shape, food, habits of an animal which he clothes with sinews and flesh; and then depicts so that we may see it browsing amongst the trees, ferns, reeds, of an ancient world. By this fact, variously verified, we have an intimate persuasion of plan, that a chain of law, order, affinity, binds all nature together; that the essences, forms, numbers of mental, emotional, physical powers, are of universal, deep, inward dependence. The moral tie binds with not less force than the physical, the religious tie holds

with like restraint, man being physical, moral, religious. We pay no real homage either to the natural or supernatural, either to science or religion, by thrusting them apart. Christianity finds its highest evidence in their loving acceptance by intelligence, and science is never more ennobled than in rising to recognition of the world's spirit-life.

These inner and outer dependencies crowd upon one another, and are so vast that science cannot formulate them, though they are the ground of our foresight. Our foreknowledge in some things is extensive, in others very limited. We anticipate the position of a satellite of Saturn hundreds of years hence, but cannot predict the state of our bodily health for an hour. As a rule, the things within our foresight are placed beyond our power; those within our power are beyond our foresight. Both are so co-ordinated that we know wisdom prevails in each—that events do not happen casually, but by co-operation. The skill of Swammerdam affords exquisite illustration. His minute and accurate dissections demonstrated that the future butterfly lay, with all its parts neatly folded up in the caterpillar. It is a beautiful example of past life preparing for future life. The "Astronomical Almanac," which we draw out for years to come, rests on no firmer arrangement than does the course of the winds—which we cannot tabulate; than the cycles of human emotions—which the wise and pure may elevate to sublimity, or the mean and sensual degrade to the lowest depth of natural brute appetite. In these mental efforts our mind aims not so much at outward formal generalization, as at that inner relation of things which shows that Nature and Mind are not

separated but correlated: Nature, in its very essence, related to Mind; and Mind realized in Nature by embodiment of thought.

Fixity and unfixity are both modes of Divine Government. If there are free beings in the world, and doubtless there are: "Legum idcirco omnes servi sumus, ut liberi esse possimus" (Cicero, "Pro Cluent"). "How would it look to you," said King Alfred, "if there were a very powerful king, and he had no free men in all his kingdom, but that all were slaves?" Said I, "It would not be thought by me right nor reasonable that only men in a servile condition should attend him." "Then," quoth he, "it would be more unnatural if God, in all His Kingdom, had no free creature under His power: therefore He made two rational creatures, angels and men, and gave them the great gift of freedom, with laws unto this end. Hence they could do evil and good, whichever they would." So, the firmest and surest of our convictions is that we can do or not do, are capable of good and evil, count for something as to our own and other's destiny. This freedom, if real, cannot be foreseen as to the whole of its conduct, otherwise freedom is not freedom.

Our reasoning is not a guess at the half and multiplying by two, like the Greeks in their famous philosophical question—Is the soul to the body as harmony to the harp? or as a rower to the boat? Does the soul cease—as music? or survive—as the rower, though his boat may be destroyed? We prove that the soul is as a rower—the Greeks could not—by actual science, for a spontaneous energy resides in the nervous centres, possesses the power of initiating molecular movements

without any antecedent sensation from without; or emotion from within; or, so far as we can tell, from any antecedent state of feeling whatever; or any stimulus extraneous to the moving apparatus itself. This is the essential prelude to voluntary power—to our unity of consciousness—the Magna Charta of our freedom.

Proceed to the Verification :—

We know that we are ourselves and not others. Bishop Butler observes, "Though the successive consciousnesses which we have of our own existence are not the same, yet are they consciousness of one and the same thing or object, of the same person, self, or living object." Every one can say, "I am I, I am not you, I am one person. I know that there is within me a co-ordinating, self-presiding power, making me one Individuality. I know as to the existence of matter, or if not of matter itself, I am conscious of those forces which manifest the so-called properties; and I know of mind, an inner cogitating ego. Matter may be merely a dream; yet, if I find it so, I still am I; but the very reason of the being of matter is that it may be perceived by mind. For what are the choir of heaven, and furniture of the earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, without a mind to know and delight in them? There are other minds, or intelligences, besides my own mind; and I and these being imperfect—therefore not self-caused—exist and have being because of Mind Supreme.

We know, then, for there is more or less of correspondence between the body and that we call the soul, between matter and mind, between physics and metaphysics; that thinking appears to work by molecular

motions in the nervous substance of the brain, and that neural tremors are connected with the key-board of the body; yet Homer and Demosthenes, Milton and Shakespeare, you and I, are not wholly exterior; nor do we utter a song, however the keys are set in motion, unless we ourselves have something to do with the music, and move the keys. The long struggle of thought, or mind, or spirit, to rise above imperfection, narrowness, and insufficiency, carries the devout mind into a region where hope passes into certitude, strife into conquest, and life eternal is realized. Our mental progress is not so much toward as within the sphere of the infinite. Our constant exercise of spiritual activity is to appropriate the inheritance of which we already possess the germ. The sacred man puts off the old and puts on the new. His life, now implicit, hid with Christ in God, will be manifested when Christ appears.

Look into this closely. Physiologists observe two kinds of fibres in the nervous mechanism: one styled automatic arcs, the other volitional. Fix your attention on these: they are a key to the whole study of the nature of the relation between the mind of man and his muscular apparatus; between the adaptations of means to ends and unreasoning instinct; between the bodily man and the mental man. In your thought, separate these two existences. Our body is the instrument by which our mind comes into relation with the external world. "We see with our eyes in the same sense as we see with glasses" (Butler, "Analogy," Part I. ch. i.). Our mind, the ego within us, means something distinct from the terrestrial world; it feels, thinks, reasons, judges, determines—receiving all its impressions from external

things through instrumentality of the body. Except in so far as spirit acts directly upon spirit—all the action of our ego upon the external world is by medium of the body; and mind reciprocates mind much more than the body reciprocates the body, so that "Thoughts rule the world." This fact shows that the world's phenomena, the vast succession of conditioned existences, is not a necessary mathematical progressive series; but something very different, motive being the prior link in the chain, and a condition of the action. Every reality is thinkable, is intelligible; we cannot so far forget or escape from our intelligence as to think that these intelligible realities are inaccessible to intelligence; and intelligible meaning is that which it ennobles us to find.

The contrast between the automatic and volitional parts of the nervous system is striking. Those organisms possessing only the lower are automata. Those possessing the upper have more or less power of will, and are responsible according to the measure of that possession. Let this physical and mental fact be fully grasped. It is that which science and philosophy must carefully and further investigate. It speaks a language which has not one empty word, a language full of mystery: sensation, thought, emotion, are so utterly incongruous with physical tremors, separated by so vast an abyss, that their connection is not seeable by the mind. The only solution is—Nature and Mind are two members of one organic whole—Nature is the product of a process in which every successive state affirms the former, and in which every future state will show that universality of intelligence which is proof of Mind.

Carry the thought a little further—We awake before

opening our eyes: that is one out of thousands of proofs that external irritation is not always necessary to internal activity: it is an example of the use of power to enable us to escape from the effects of a former state. It may be otherwise illustrated—A deep cut in the finger leaves a scar that is never obliterated; though every seven years, some say one year, the whole finger and the whole body are renewed in all their substance. It is a symbol of the permanence and reality underlying all change and appearance. Take a further view. Evil habits, vicious courses, the dull inebriate's life, the vile person's seared brain, though every particle of the body and brain has passed away, are a lasting curse to the possessor; and carry the evil beyond the grave to children's children. "Κραιπνὸς δὲ μετέρχεται, εἰδοκε πᾶσαν συμμάρψας ὀλέσῃ γενεὴν καὶ οἶκον ἅπαντα" (Herodotus, vi. 86). To resist, and in part overcome this abiding evil, the volitional nerve-arcs may be put into action; giving power to check and modify the automatic action of the nervous mechanism which has been abused.

The volitional power may, by force of habit, become almost automatic—whether for good or evil. Satan's orator can acquire fluent, powerful, extemporaneous eloquence—

> "Though all is false and hollow, yet his tongue
> Drops manna, and can make the worse appear
> The better reason, to perplex and dash
> Maturest counsels"—
>
> MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, ii. 112 (slightly altered).

and sometimes the pious man falls into slovenly speech. We may scar our nervous system with evil habits, and sear our conscience as with a red-hot iron; or, little by

little, build up a character beautiful and strong. The soul of one man wells forth a living spring, and flows as a river of life to many. Another man, by abuse of voluntary power, becomes a demon. We are not to regard the action of our volitional nervous arcs as creative of force; but as springs for the optional opening of reservoirs of energy, stored within, for use of free-will.

Experience shows that the bodily and mental constitution, acquired during our period of growth, becomes "a second nature," and the nervo-muscular apparatus, concerned in executing the mandates of the mind, acts as a trained automaton. When we mentally determine to do a thing, we will. The will does not, as physiologists formerly believed, throw itself into a particular set of muscles; but says to the automaton, "Do this," and it obeys. Those who maintain that the mind is wholly dependent upon the bodily organization, exclude all possibility of real *self*-direction. John Stuart Mill, speaking of this, says, "I felt as if I was scientifically proved to be the helpless slave of antecedent circumstances, as if my character and that of all others had been formed for us by agencies beyond our control, and was wholly out of our own power." The real facts of the case are, as he himself states, "We have real power over the formation of our own character; our will, by influencing some of our circumstances, can modify our future habits or capacities of willing." We all feel that this fairly represents the real facts. Freedom is an essential attribute of will—or will is not will. We are more free to do right, and less to do wrong; have more use in the subordination of our powers to reason, than in abuse of reason; and the limits are our capacity of self-develop-

ment and improvement. In earlier life, our characters are formed for us rather than by us; but there comes a time when we take the formation into our own hands, and thenceforth it depends upon ourselves what course the development shall take—"Ἡ δὲ ἠθικὴ ἐξ ἔθους γίγνεται" (Aristotle, "Ethics").

> "Use doth breed a habit in a man."
>
> SHAKESPEARE.
>
> "A character is a completely fashioned will."
>
> NOVALIS.

The most valuable result of early training is the enabling us to be our own masters—"sui potens" (Horace, "Ode" iii. 29, 41), to keep lower appetites and passions in subjection—"ἐγκρατὴς ἑαυτοῦ," and to give full favourable exercise to our higher faculties.

In some measure, then, the soul or spirit, or that which puts volition in action, if not able to create force, is able to acquire energy. From what reservoir does it so acquire? Is it from the vast universe, flowing in according to the measure of the man, or from the nearness of God Almighty? Who knows? We want the strong and wise of our race to be up and doing, to gird themselves with science, reverently to explore the mysteries—"In mysteriis perscrutandis absit pervicacia contendendi, adsit diligentia requirendi, humilitas petendi, perseverantia pulsandi" (S. Augustine)—and tell us plainly concerning the energy, physical and intellectual, that we find in the world, whether or not it cometh, as we assert, from God Almighty. Our consciousness, all the facts of our personality, when duly examined, do they not point to an omnipresent God—upholding all

things? The question and the marvel turn not on the continuance of our own being, this seems involved in the fact that we already are in being: to die means simply that change—"Μεταβολή τις τυγχάνει οὖσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνδένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον" (Plato, "Ap. Soc.")—by which we become no longer perceptible to ordinary sense.

> "Change! there is nought but change and renewal of strife,
> Which make up the infinite changes we sum up in life.
> Life! what is life, that it ceases with ceasing of breath?
> Death! what were life without change, but an infinite Death?"
>
> *The Ode of Life.*

Physicists assert that a simple elementary atom is an everlasting being—"æterno constant semina quæque" (Lucret., i. 222). We claim like permanence and reality for the soul. Butler ("Analogy," i. 1) says, "Since consciousness is a single and individual power, it would seem that the subject in which it resides must be so too." As a man throweth away old garments and putteth on new, so the unknown energy bringeth forth and inhabiteth the new. Even the atoms, as their existence is inconceivable apart from intelligence, are energized by Intelligence—the Cause of all causation—the Life of all that lives—the Mind of all that thinks.

View the mental process by which energy may be acquired to develop our character.

We are all able determinately to fix our attention upon some one object. We can look upon a picture, then examine every part separately. We can, if we have a musical ear, single out any instrument in an orchestra and follow it through the whole performance. Carry this fact to any object of study, endeavour to fix and

maintain your attention by sufficient effort—"Attention is the link between the moral and intellectual faculties" (Kant). Determinate effort is an act of the will, and the power of so fixing and concentrating attention is almost the highest and best in our intellectual self-education, and is the great means by which we effect our moral self-improvement. Selective attention, intensifying of mental gaze; then making the object fixed on call up some other, and another, until knowledge, or memory, by determinate fixation, attains the desired result; is the secret of high moral and mental success. Every child should be taught to do this. Begin with a few minutes at a time; by gradual and judicious training the child will gladly exert itself determinately; and thus will be laid that foundation without which nothing supremely good can be attained, whether in intellectual study or in moral discipline.

Look at the moral side—we may be tempted to indulge in wine, to apply our powers to ill uses, to play some mean trick, to gain credit not due to us. Though we cannot bring motives before our mind, can only take what comes to our mind, we can think of the wrong, of the consequences, and determinately direct our attention, our conscience, to the reasons why we should not do the evil thing; and we can fix our attention upon something else. Dr. W. B. Carpenter says, "I ask you to take as your guiding star, as it were, in the conduct of your lives, these four words—'I am, I ought, I can, I will.' 'I am' is the expression of reflection and self-consciousness, the looking in upon our own trains of thought. 'I ought' expresses the sense of moral obligation—Turn to the right, and keep straight on. 'I can'—the consciousness

of power—is the foundation of all effort. Lastly, it is not enough to say, 'I am, I ought, I can'—we must *will* to do it. 'I will,' of the ego, can train the mental as well as the bodily of the automaton, and make it do anything it is capable of executing." Kant, "Introd. to Dogm.," gives four questions—

"1. Was kann ich wissen?" What know I?

"2. Was soll ich thun?" What do I?

"3. Was darf ich hoffen?" What hope I?

"4. Was ist der Mensch?" What am I?

The frontal lobes of our brain are the principal seat of intellect. We know, as scientific thinkers, that within certain limits of choice and action, we are free from compulsion by the vital, social, dynamical forces, at work in the cosmos; and can, in part, control them. We know as moral beings, that within a sphere of which our consciences are sufficiently informed, we are accountable for the use of our faculties of thought, of emotion, of action. We are aware that God is not proved nor known by anything foreign to His own being. He reveals Himself to thought and in thought: all true thought of God is, itself, divine thought.

The action of the volitional nervous mechanism is not wholly awakened, nor performed by the physical causes which operate in the automatic nervous arcs, it may, indeed, be independent of them. The will continually initiates movements: is that reality, present in our consciousness, which is a great certainty. The distinction between voluntary and involuntary movement is recognized by every physiologist. The spirit of life is not the mechanism, nor its motion; but that which makes, that which moves it—a law within the law—an inward

miracle. That which builds the mechanism may survive the unbuilding, sing a song more wonderful, tell a tale more marvellous, in some future habitation. Was it not—

> " . . . for this the fiery spark
> Of Thy Eternal Self, sown on the vast
> And infinite abysses of the past,
> Revealed itself, and made Creation rise?"
>
> *The Ode of Life.*

This Power of Volition, of Law within the Law, demands that provision be made for every event, an arrangement which takes into account all the actuals and possibles, so that no creature, small or great, be out of control. The provision is proved by divine interference —by miracles, and the Supernatural interference is no ground for belief in any new law of nature, nor for disbelieving any law supposed to be established. The miraculous power is only one of an indefinite number of known and unknown forces—a power which we never have seen, and perhaps can never hope to see reduced to mechanical law—a power so rarely exercised, that it in no way interferes with our practical reliance on the general uniformity of physical law.

The interference may thus be thought of—Freedom rendered evil possible. When possible evil became actual, the interposition of remedy, of narrowing or of enlargement, of death or of life, was not by abrupt and violent changes of the Eternal's laws, but by operation of law within the law. He does not recall the fire of Etna when a saint is near; nor impress earth or sea with new motions, that gravitation may cease, because a pious man is nigh. Through agencies, ordained from the be-

ginning, comes warning or punishment, restraint or relief; and, sometimes, help from a profundity that seemed before but shallowness; for discipline of freedom. We contradict no scientific belief in accepting the miracles of deliverance from Egypt. These, and those which occurred in Palestine and elsewhere, are as nothing in comparison with the general uniformity of law; and special acts—subject to no law—are all confirmations of extraordinary truth and teaching. Can our understanding conceive anything more enlarged than this provident dealing of an omnipresent God? Can our wisdom find profounder occupation than searching the marvels that reveal such depths of Divine Counsel? Can our imagination ascend higher than this throne of the Omniscient and Almighty? The reason, enabling us to think of these mysteries, constitutes our essential superiority to all other earthly creatures. By it we are foreseeing, versatile, acute, and have such wonderful memory. By it we are made, Cicero said, "an excerpt from the Divine;" and by it, Seneca said, "the spirit of man is a portion, as it were spark of the Divine Spirit." Pythagoras and the Stoics called the souls of men σπέρματα and ἀποσπάσματα of the Divine. Virgil, 'Æneid," vi. 730, says—

> "Igneus est ollis vigor et cælestis origo
> Seminibus."

Endowed with a mind which faintly reflects His own, we seek Him, know Him, love Him, serve Him. No man was ever truly great without an inspiration from on high, and every poet worth the name was inflamed by Divine truth.

The half-learned man laughs at the simple faith which

believes that rain comes from God. He may learn a good lesson, in Foster's "Life of Bishop Jebb," of a lace-working woman in ill health who dwelt in a garret—"I get up and look out of the window, and gaze awhile at the moon and stars, the work of an Almighty Hand. I think of the grandeur of the universe, and then sit down and think myself one of the happiest beings in it." The philosopher arrives at the conclusion that God is seen in the rain and the sunshine, in the great and the small. Faust, in one of his bitter moments, said, "Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind" (Act i. sc. 1). The true cure for half-learning is thorough learning. Bacon, "Essay on Atheism," states, "A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion." It is the greatest earthly consolation to know that Divine Government is leading all things to new manifestations of goodness, though life's storms drive towards a rocky shore. Why do these storms rage? Because evil abounds? "Here is sin," says a voice from one quarter; "Here is sin," repeats a voice from another quarter; everything finds speech to declare, "Sin and guilt are here." How great, then, the need for skilful arrangement, that those who have broken loose from moral restraint be not physically enforced to obedience; but, won by love, be gently restrained by sense of right! "Ἔρως ἀνίκατε μαχαν," and "omnia vincit amor," are true in a far higher sense than Sophocles or Virgil meant. It is Wisdom's highest operation when, by Law within the Law, the turns and winds, the changes and chances, of human life are guided by winsome purity —are assuaged by gentle persuasiveness of righteousness —so that Wisdom and Law never fail. Wisdom and

Law so binding nature to the Supernatural, that every evil is made to procure a greater good; and every miracle is a star within nature's sky—God's token that glorious worlds shine above. Miracles respond to the richness and fulness of spiritual experiences, are nature's rapt moments, and answer to our sense of the ineffable.

> "In such access of mind, in such high hour
> Of visitation from the Living God,
> Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.
> Rapt into still communion that transcends
> The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
> His mind was a thanskgiving to the Power
> That made him; it was blessedness and love."

THOUGHT XXIV.

EVOLUTION AS A TRUE THEORY.

"Even the poorest aspect of Nature, especially of living Nature, is a type and manifestation of the Invisible Spirit that works in Nature . . . He is wise who discerns Wisdom in unpretending forms, and recognizes her royal features under week-day vesture . . . Late in man's history, but clearly it becomes manifest that Mind is stronger than matter, that Mind is the Creator and Shaper of matter."—THOMAS CARLYLE.

"The laws of nature are the thoughts of God."—ŒRSTED.

THEOLOGIANS do not object to an interpretation of Creation by the scientific theory of Evolution. They know that the divine account, expressive of orderly development, reveals a wonderful process, which renders inexcusable the atheistic abuse of science. The blow-hole of a shark may be the prototype of a human ear, the science of Embryology may indicate that the rudimentary forms of a man represent the fashions of his forefathers, and a curious African toad may be the very earliest existing thing with toe and finger nails like those of a human being. Suppose that worms, fishes, reptiles, men, are steps in the process of ascent, this orderly development is proof of prearrangement; and as uniformity can never, of itself, bring in variety, otherwise the effect exceeds the cause, variety indicates the pre-

sence of some all-pervading directive energy. An artist may depict a flower, God only can create a law that shall make a flower.

The history of life is that portion of modern science with which extreme theorists have most unfairly dealt. They forge all missing links, and assume a practically unlimited time, though, if we adopt Professor Dana's estimate, we have only forty-eight millions of years since the Cambrian Period; and by Sir William Thomson's calculation one hundred millions from the beginning of a solid crust. Simple plants first existed, animals of low grade were introduced almost simultaneously, and the life of both originated in the waters. Thence till now the great laws of physical nature have been the same. The same plans of organic structure, with modifications, prevail everywhere; and not by a mere combination of physical forces; for life, as a force, or combination of forces, is in antagonism to all other forces. The earliest known life, Eozoön, was a member of that lowest grade of Protozoa, Foraminifera, which has lived through all geological time, and still abounds in the sea. There was advance to more complex forms, and again and again return to the more primitive types. New forms swarmed into existence, and old forms perished; nevertheless, the oldest known forms of life are still found among the newest. There is no decided break in the continuity of marine life. Amongst sponges, the most mechanically perfect, those of lattice-work plan, are the earliest. Corals are neither more nor less elevated than their predecessors. Moss-corals (Bryozoa) are in modern seas similar to those of the Early Palæozoic. The complex and highly organized form of the Trilobite appears suddenly

in the Early Cambrian, and all the types of invertebrate marine life break upon us in successive influx of new forms; not gradual, but intermittent; not so much in a struggle for existence as by expansion under favourable circumstances. As for plant life on the land, there was a long continuance and frequent changes of species of acrogenous plants without any perceptible elevation. Fishes like the Lancelet, of soft and perishable bodies, may have preceded all others; but it is remarkable that groups of old-fashioned fishes (Ganoids) are in some respects highest, and approach nearest to reptiles. The earliest known air-breathers are insects, allied to modern May-flies. Reptiles and birds, of somewhat different superstructures, are raised upon one and the same ground-plan. Modern plants are correlated with modern animals: the highest of both appeared together. There was a simultaneous appearance of many of the modern forms in the Cretaceous era; and by rapid introduction, with ordinal differentiation, speedy culmination, and early decadence of many types, came the Tertiary placental mammals. The gradual advance of brain-development in the Tertiary mammals presaged the mastery of mind; but, in man, the mental powers so exceed physical organization as not to culminate but to revolutionize the scheme of organic nature. The old was put to new use, varied arts entered, thought advanced into the domain of general and abstract truth. Henceforth, victory is not with brute force, but on the side of will and intelligence. The earliest men were of average stature, powerful muscular development, large brain, altogether men. The vast leap was part of a wonderful and yet continuing process. The many chains of life

are not disunited and scattered: but coming forth from God they return to God; unity in increasing complexity marks the whole process. In periods of expansion came new forms, and the times of contraction were those of extinction. The periodicity of introduction was, as tides, preceded and followed by receding flow. The development was not that of embryonic conditions; the conditions and agents were altogether different; but a curious analogy in some of the steps has furnished atheistic men with partial and delusive arguments. The thoroughfare is from the unseen. Science cannot explain it by atheistic theory as if the small, the weak, the low, made the great, the strong, the high, by infinitesimal additions or increments—that would be nonsense. "Both science and religion teach us that our consciousness is continually acted upon through the medium of matter and its forces, by an infinite, unceasing, omnipresent, and resistless First Cause; and a general knowledge of science supports the hypothesis that occult powers may exist which we have not yet discovered" (G. Gore, F.R.S., "Scientific Discovery," p. 127).

We offer germs of various thoughts concerning evolution, for illustration of the means whereby the Almighty works manifold processes: Supernatural and Natural, Miraculous and Common, Idealistic and Materialistic. The Supernatural, Miraculous, Idealistic, are modes in which the Supreme transcends all the, at present, ascertained laws of the universe.

The atheistic materialist discerns merely the Natural and Common—not the brighter features in them, not the true meaning of the space-filling stuff of the universe. In refusing to allow that there is an Intelligent Author,

and in asserting that the only intelligence of which we have any experience is a consequent of matter, he is guilty of twofold error: 1, in thinking that the intelligible order of things by which life and intelligence are possible—is eternal, or came into being without aid of life and intelligence; 2, in believing that the universe, which is neither eternal nor self-made in any of its parts, is either eternal or self-made in the whole of those parts. No other stupidity, or credulity, or superstition, can equal this.

"Vis consili expers."

HORACE, iii. 465.

"Ῥώμη ἀμαθής."

EURIPIDES, *Frag.*

". . . finita potestas denique quoique
Quanam fit ratione, atque alte terminus hærens."

LUCRET., i. 77.

Scientific men know that the inorganic ascends so gradually into the organic, the dead quickens so imperceptibly into life, the unintelligent brightens with such indistinguishable growth and grade of illumination, that no man is able to state how, when, where, one ends and the other begins. The supernatural and natural are inseparable: one is the essence, the other is the manifestation. One of the most positively asserted laws of nature is "the phenomena in the past determine all phenomena in succeeding time," in other words—"the subsequent state of the world is the effect of the previous state;" but this cannot be proved. In fact, the universe will never return to exactly the same state in which it was at any previous moment. Whether the universe—at two successive instants—is connected as a whole; or

—in separate parts—by causal links ; it is certain that no finite mind, however gifted, can infer, from the present, either the past or the future ; or say, "it was and it will be regular." Natural continuance is a succession of variables. Nature, ever and ever, becomes other than it is. Hence, the continual and momentary involution and evolution of things is by a ceaseless universal blending of the natural with the preternatural.

By similar process, investigate the evolution of the common from the miraculous. Scientists amuse us by trying to show that material causes are a sufficient explanation of facts as we see them : but we can never be sure of that. There is an infinite number of causes, and to think that the few we know—apart from the many unknown, are the only causes is folly indeed. Everything known exists as part of something else, and the cause of a thing is not the thing itself. That which is true of all the parts, is true of the whole ; for the whole is not more than the total of the several parts ; therefore, the universe—the sum total of worlds—exists and continues to exist by means of other than itself. The conditioned is evolved from the unconditioned, time from eternity, and space from infinitude. Thus, thought enlarges the measure of belief, and leads to the scientific hypothesis that our capacity of thought is not the limit of existence, nor can knowledge be coextensive with faith. The common is an evolution wrought and maintained by the constant afflux and influx of that eternal infinite energy which by universally diffused media gives force, mass, and chemical affinity to atoms ; vitality and intelligence to organisms. No man can say where the common begins, or where the miraculous ends.

Apply evolution to the process by which the ideal becomes material. When men talk of the moon and of elementary substances, they mean things that we see or touch; but when science speaks about the intimate structure of bodies, words must be used which have only a symbolic meaning, for the intimate structure can neither be perceived nor handled. Whether Realism or Idealism be true; whether matter is all in all, or Mind is the cause transcending all; the world, as represented by science, can no more be adequately perceived than can God, as set forth by theology; we have only weak symbolical images. If, instead of trying to form an idea of matter as it appears to us, we strive for knowledge of what it really is, we attempt an impossibility: sense and reason alike fail. The ideal blends with the essence of all that is real; the states and very existence of matter, so far as we are concerned, can only be inferred by means of mind. We get at the material by the ideal. This view of the inscrutable operations by which the natural is evolved from the supernatural, the common from the miraculous, the material from the ideal, shows the reasonableness of the hypothesis that the course of the cosmos is by directed progress with provision for every kind of life and intelligence.

If any quibble at the word design, they may say "purpose." As to purpose, think of it as manifested in progress: past, present, future. The past, an indefinitely extended line in one direction; the future, an indefinitely extended line in another direction; the present, a line intersecting all existence in which the past and future meet. Add the conception that this infinitely extended line rotates from left to right. Then reason

further—the progress from infinity to infinity is actual, every present moment can exist only by intersection of the infinite—at some certain yet ever-varying and shifting point—for production of the things that are and those that shall be; and there is required—at these ever-varying and shifting points of the infinite line—a never-ceasing directive intersection and convergence of those innumerable forces which effect the wide-embracing teleology and adaptations of the universe. It is possible for directiveness to be manifested by a machine, or by a tree, these possessing no intelligence; but this proves that the blind instrument is made to act by a seeing principle—a mind.

This conception of the unseen directively bearing down upon us from an infinitude—

> "Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans"—
>
> LUCRET., i. 66.

having relations with a past and a future eternity, accounts for our consciousness of God, our yearnings for immortality, and affords a plea for belief in Revelation concerning supreme Life and Intelligence. It becomes a power of discernment rendering our reason far-sighted. It puts to utmost and highest tasks our faculty to investigate the true utility and hidden wisdom of the works of God; and in its use we possess knowledge of the Divine Existence. "Nous vivons en effet au milieu d'un systeme de choses invisibles manifestées visiblement" (J. De Maistre, "Les Soirées de St. Petersbourg"). This knowledge, in its tendency to wisdom, grasps truth, not as isolated notions or facts, but as correlated members of an organic whole.

The realities of this knowledge may seem, to those defective in spiritual insight, pale, thin, and ineffectual as Ossian's ghost—

"νεκύων ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα·"

HOMER, *Odyssey*, K. 521.

"Tenues sine corpore formæ;"

VIRGIL, *Æneid*, vi. 292.

but unto possessors of adequate power to discern that the wants and aspirations of spiritual nature are proof of some great reality, they will be as the light of stars shining through space, as potentialities and prophetic tokens of immortality.

Able, by our thought of time and eternity, of space, of infinitude, of progress in nature, to evolve a persuasion of the Divine Existence and of immortality; it is clear that the Supernatural is not inconsistent with the Natural, otherwise, our faculties would be in permanent confusion. Indeed, we are compelled to believe in an infinite Existence; and we naturally associate even the motions of matter with some occult sensation—a life escaping our observation. This finite conception of Godhead, of Revelation and scientific teachings, must necessarily be of a human imperfect character. Owing to forgetfulness of this, materialists and unscientific theologians separate into two hostile camps.

The close investigation of nature leads to mystery, the natural conducts to the Supernatural. We perceive that all changeable limited and conditioned things are connected with a permanent infinite and unconditioned reality; that the visible universe, not being self-made in any of the parts, cannot be self-made as a whole. Our knowledge of God and persuasion of immortality, though

partaking of the Supernatural and miraculous, are scientific. Scientific, because the faculties by which we attain knowledge and co-ordinate it into system are the base of our every effort to rise above the finite and variable to the permanent and boundless.

We now inquire concerning that matter, or space-filling stuff, of which things are formed. Is Matter eternal? Investigation must precede reply.

An accurate geometric mechanical basis of physical science, sufficiently comprehensive to include all that atheistic evolutionists assume for their theory, cannot be laid until we know the forms, sizes, positions of atoms, and their combinations in molecules. This realm of attainable knowledge is so immensely great that probably vast labour and time will be required for its investigation. Jevons ("Principles of Science," vol. ii. p. 452) says, "An atom of pure iron is probably a vastly more complicated system than that of the planets and their satellites." Others state that pure iron, ignited to whiteness, emits simultaneously rays of light of more than four hundred and sixty different rates of vibration. Titanium emits a much larger number. The changes produced by heat on these metallic substances are so great that (as stated in *Philosophical Magazine*, September, 1870) in some experiments they seem endowed with vitality. All these changes and all known substances are so inseparably related that universality of causation and universality of law are the assumed foundation of all scientific truth. Matter is also assumed to be the seat of energy—wherever matter exists, is energy—potential or active. To these laws are added—the persistence of matter and energy, correlation of forces,

dissipation of forces. We are further told that possibly in some of the hottest stars, such as Sirius, all elementary bodies are dissolved by intense heat into the primal element hydrogen. Our widening science is also fairly accurate. Whitworth has measured the one millionth of an inch. Joule detected the eight thousand eight hundredth of a centigrade degree of temperature. Wheatstone, by mirror and electric spark, ascertained the seventy-two thousandth part of a second of time. Bunsen detected a quantity small as the one hundred and eighty millionth part of a grain of sodium. By the microscope we are able to see the fifty or even the hundred thousandth part of an inch in length, yet to discern even the molecules, let alone the ultimate atoms of substances, our power will have to be increased five hundred or two thousand times (Sorby, "Address to Royal Microscopical Society," February 2, 1876). Men of science infer, and rightly so far as science can go, that the sum total of matter and energy in the universe is invariable, and that matter and energy are indestructible by human means. We find, moreover, that the great masses of the universe are composed of very much the same materials, and bound together by laws which, scientifically perceived, reveal somewhat of the origin, growth, and decay of worlds. The human race must perish; the earth, planets, sun, all other suns and planets, must pass away; therefore, as matter and energy are eternal, there may be new worlds in endless recurring series, and with ever-increasing splendour. In this universal decay and possible rejuvenescence of worlds atoms are said to be eternal. Who can know? The sun, vastly stored with forces, is not everlasting; why is it

reasonable that the atoms, with but an infinitesimal small store of energy, should be everlasting? It is by some deemed inconceivable that matter should be created; is it easier to conceive it self-existent? Take a scientific opinion—"The primordial atoms were all of the same pattern, of intensely rapid vibration, and always in motion; differences were formed by various groupings, and hence we have those we call elements." This principle, of *most* action, is opposed to an established philosophical system of *least* action; and good thinkers are endeavouring to amend it by adopting "Etherspheres" as "a Vera Causa in Natural Philosophy" (Rev. S. Earnshaw, M.A.). If all elements are reducible to one, may not that one have been produced from that nothing out of which, most men think, God brought everything? We seem to be scientifically led to think of some anterior state, an unseen universe, out of which the existing atoms were brought.

If brought as material for worlds, what was the process? Could it have been by means of vortex-motion set up in the æther, or in some other fluid filling the whole of space? This fluid, if equally diffused, could hardly have, of itself, a propensity to develop vortex-rings—

"οὐράνιαί τε δῖναι νεφέλας δρομαίου."

EURIPIDES, *Alcest.*, 245.

"ἐν αἰθερίῳ ῥόμβῳ φύσιν ἐμπλεξάνθ'."

EURIPIDES, *Frag.*

and if not equally diffused, why not? By the automatic theory, dead atoms, with no properties, must at some definite time have diversified and assorted themselves, adopted the universal force of gravity, and then

every one adapted its own peculiar attractions and motions to those of every other. This, apart from intelligence, is incredible. We must also presume a prior universe, like or unlike that of the æther from which the present has been derived; and that, too, must have been developed from a previous state; so there has been process after process, forming together a vista of worlds of which it is impossible to see the beginning or end. Such a view does not content us. There must have been origination or beginning wherever succession exists. The many worlds, however far traced back, were evolved by action of Directive Intelligent Energy: otherwise, method, progression, adaptation, would not be possible.

The phenomena of life are but as a small fringe of that Divine garment—the Universe, which clothes the inner Life. Life is productive: even a tiny crystal, placed in "a saturated solution" of the same salt, multiplies copies of itself. "The self-repairing power of a crystal is like that of a human being." There is a subjective and life-side in everything: atoms in nowise suggest death. Electricity connects itself with the shapings of leaves. Plants and animals are subject to the same great laws. Some plants move, are sensitive, have appetites, are carnivorous. They sleep, and some take pains to avoid intense light. Certain leaves, like beasts of prey, rise in the evening and sink at dawn. The tips of the radicles of plants are sensitive, and seem to act like the brains of lower animals; nor are the loves of plants wholly fabulous and fanciful. Unity reigns throughout the realms of life—no confusion; but everywhere a growth wonderfully and variously unfolding one principle, manifesting

one and the same guiding Spirit, forming groups of molecules to become vessels of less or greater consciousness; structures of more marvellous skill, motion, and complex power, than a watch. Their being all alike—if they were alike—and enormously great number, lead us to conclude that they were the platform used by Intelligence for display of variety.

Biologists affirm that no organized being can be naturally produced except from an organized antecedent. This we take account of, and hold that life can only spring from life; for we must, if men are to agree at all, take the universe to be as it is known—and up to this time life is a mystery, nor can we say it is produced by a mere arrangement of physical forces. This general conviction of the evolution of life from life, leads to the recognition of previous life in a precedent world, of a living Unseen. The life of our globe, like the life of every individual, descended to it; and as we go back and back, we come at length to one Life—one Being—one God, who has developed and sustains the present order. This is truly scientific. Processes take place in our world which, like the elements composing it, are too subtle to be apprehended by sense, or even, in some cases, to be conceived by imagination. That the things we see with our eyes, and touch with our hands, do really exist we make no question about—they represent a permanent something; and that this permanent something is rather an externalization of mind is certainly more probable than that matter is the cause of all and is without Mind. If there be such a Mind, and every thought seems proof of it, Evolution, as an atheistic system, is a dreary sinful delusion. To explain how the world as it is came from

the world as it was, we must modify evolution both as to its method and pretensions.

All that is natural leads to the supernatural, every phenomenon is a revelation. One particular body of knowledge, the ordinary working of the universe, we call —"science." Another particular body of knowledge, we call—"the prophets' book," yielding desirable information, not derivable from nature's common process. This better knowledge has great practical usefulness, placing the possessors in a position of advantage, and confirming the latent hopes of humanity. It gives them a religious conviction of immortality; in virtue of which they are full of generous and noble faith, can achieve excellence; and by means even of things most disastrous, and in positions hopeless and helpless, work out a glorious, physical, vital, mental, moral condition. The premises of all knowledge, whether of science or theology, consist of immediate and intuitive beliefs. Some concern the original elements of mind—our original beliefs; some concern our actual subjective states—sensitive and intellectual; our science has no more philosophical certitude than our religion; we have practical need of both. This drives out the poor shallow view that the universe is bound together by physical force only.

Is it not then altogether outrageous to speak of the Christian Revelation as if it were one of the many exploded theories of the many schools of human philosophy? The Decalogue, three thousand years old, is without a parallel in any merely human code. The mysteries of the Incarnation, the Life, the Death, the Resurrection of the Founder of our Faith, notwithstand-

ing our boasted advance, are but imperfectly understood. Human intellects are very limited—

> "Our knowledge measured to our state and place,
> Our time a moment, and a point our space."
> POPE, *Essay on Man*, i. 71 (slightly altered).

Bishop Butler (Sermon on "Ignorance of Man") says, "Every secret which is disclosed serves only to convince us of numberless more which remain concealed." Science does not escape from mystery. "Pour savoir bien une chose, il fallait savoir un peu mille." We must act in faith, not alone on the evidence of our senses. Faith in the incomprehensible is not less the refuge of the atheist, and of the pantheist, than of the Christian. We differ in the widest possible manner on all questions of the day—whether in politics or science—can we expect to have the means of *fully* judging concerning matters of faith, seeing that reason is weak even in easier things? The Bible was a progressive and continuous revelation culminating in Christianity. It is now, by spiritual evolution in a divine sense, culminating in the redemption and sanctification of our race and habitation. In obedience to the higher principles of our nature, we believe in spiritual presences—such as the angels; and in spiritual energies conducting men to the scenes and life of the future. If, on the contrary, there could be a nation in utter disbelief as to a future state and responsibility to God, that nation would lower its standard of moral excellence—for moral ideas conform to their actual ideal, and the diminishment would conform to every change of the ideas. That nation would lose power, and fall to pieces.

The great realities—God, Immortality, Revelation—

are in connection with a system of infinitely vast teleological development, with truths early revealed, the height and depth of which we are only beginning to apprehend. Regarded merely as the evolved intellectual and emotional conviction that men are responsible to the Supreme; and as the great motive power in duty, the great consoler in trouble, the great enabler to excellence; it is in the highest sense unreasonable and unscientific that men, not spiritually constituted, of a peculiarly animal mind, should raise doubt concerning realities supremely great and good. The life of Christ, the lives of all holy men, prove the truth of Christianity: how, otherwise, account for Him and them? Our Saviour, viewed even as a mere man, did more for ethics than ten men like Newton could do for physics. For ages, little has been done by all the men in the world, except the practical application to life of the Divine Doctrines long ago given—not evolved from the then existing consciousness, for the moral ideas are even now beyond our reach. How unwise, then, to put physical science—always, until of late, backward—in antagonism to spiritual and moral truth! Nature is not restraint on freedom, it is the organ of freedom; reveals in her unsolved and insoluble mysteries the supremacy of spirit over matter; anticipates and predicts a state of harmony and beauty for which the present prepares the true-hearted. "Dieu n'agit dans le temps, que pour l'éternité" (Massillon)—

> "Cosa no cumplida
> Si no en otra vida."
>
> FERNAN CABALLERO.

When these great things are done, we shall know what the Bible really is, that Life and Inspiration mean

much more than we thought, that the whole world, all the arts, every science, death itself, perform parts in our spiritual education.

There are many evils, perplexing occurrences and things out of joint, but to the Great Governor they doubtless present a different aspect. Disease and suffering are messengers by whom He summons men to His presence. Marvel and miracle, enigma and parable, proving the dependence of nature on the Creator, are means of awakening and strengthening intelligence and faith.

> "All nature is but art unknown to thee,
> All chance direction which thou canst not see,
> All discord harmony not understood,
> All partial evil universal good."
>
> POPE, *Essay on Man*, i. 289.

Miracles have not ceased, though rare in these days. S. Chrysostom says there were many miracles ("Ep. ad Col."), "*ὅτε φυτευθῆναι ἔδει τὴν πίστιν.*" The Incarnation of Jesus Christ in the new birth of believers, and the Presence of the Holy Spirit in our heart, are permanent miracles. Day by day, the Holy Spirit enables the willing to possess and manifest the true power of Christianity. A standing miracle exists and has always existed—a direct continual influence of the Supernatural on the natural: "*οὐ διέλιπε Θεὸς θαυματουργῶν διηνεκῶς*" (S. Chrysost., Ps. cx.). The truly faithful are assisted and guided every instant by light and knowledge.

Some of the Old Testament miracles were adapted to the primitive state; and their peculiarity, rightly regarded, conveys speciality of evidence as to their own truth; and we may say—they live on, and have evidence

even now in that which they confirmed. Men nurtured in Bible Truth are instinct with enterprise, no old-world fixity is in them, everywhere is expansiveness.

> "In lazy apathy let Stoics boast,
> Their virtue fixed; 'tis fixed as in a frost."
>
> POPE, *Essay on Man.*

Our Christian faith, or religious system, is never in a state of indolent repose. Though of the East, it has not Oriental fixity, the everlasting *status quo*, it is ever acting, fighting, and fought against. Ever and ever is some Reformation, and this will go on, making the old Revelation new, until men arrive at an adequate conception of the meaning, power, essence, of Christianity.

Spiritual processes become materialized, and when psychology is developed we shall see many glories in the light of knowledge. Meanwhile, if rare phenomena are observed, anything not falling in with our preconceived opinions, we have faith. If formal science enlarges its borders, we may obtain knowledge even of angels. There are virtually in us the rudiments of the highest and noblest; but only as they are evolved by faith, painstaking, prayer, obedience, do we become high and noble. What good and evil lie in that fact! Doubtless, when men have cultivated the finer elements of spiritual life, new harmonies, an improved understanding, a cloudless firmament, will brighten their inner world. They will have communion with the pure and holy and high existences of this wonderful universe. Prospects now faint in the distance, and far-off indications, will become realities of glory in which body and soul partake. Fulness of Christianity is fulness of the laws of the world.

By it God conducts us in wonderful advance to higher realms of light and truth. A millionth part has not yet been revealed of that which we have to know. The wisest man in the world, though he has learned of what the stars are formed, measures the flight of suns and maps out space, cannot tell assuredly what a moment will bring forth. We see by the illumination given instant by instant, we walk by faith, but ere long that Divine Revelation—which veils much more than it reveals—will open bright prospects: "we are the sons of God . . . and He hath promised us eternal life." It is even now our very life and thought to be dominated by Intelligence—to have no other mind than that. We would become the obedient servants and loving children of the Infinite. Call it faith, or trust, or self-surrender, or what you will, we identify our finite life with a life eternal. Day by day, we elevate our spirit into a region where hope is certitude, we enter peace, we are at rest.

THOUGHT XXV.

LIGHT OF NATURE.

"In tantum videbimus Deum, in quantum sumus similes."

"Narratives of a miraculous character must not be rejected because of their marvellousness. Rather, we may conclude that but for their marvellousness they would not have been remembered and recorded."—THOMAS GRIFFITHS, *Studies of the Divine Master*, p. 405.

EVERY blade of grass on our green flowery well-built earth points to a realm of mystery out of which all phenomena spring. All history, all experience, our irrepressible instincts, bespeak an eternal reality—something more than surface forms and vanishing semblances. Not our eye can see it, not our words can utter it, we understand by our spirit; and when we understand there is nothing however small, no passing gleam of nature, no wayside flower, but has a divine meaning and reveals a divine presence.

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is and God the soul,
That changed in all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth as in the ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul."

POPE, *Essay on Man*, i.

Quackery and dupery have been busy among us, babbling poorly, with sounding nomenclature, physical experimenting, and what not, to prove—that God everywhere is not God with Us. Common sense is now awaking, and thinks, "Mind makes the man, and the soul stamps him as of worth." Mind carries man to see the reason of matter's thousand-fold complexity of forces; and mind discerns that Intelligence cannot be darkest where thought shines brightest. Mind says, "If God reveals His thoughts in material thousand-fold complexity, which cannot know anything, is it not that those able to know may be instructed? Is it not to brighten the intelligence of reasonable creatures, and that men may have courts of science, and halls of literature? We certainly have a revelation in the worlds of Eternal Power and Godhead, we certainly possess God-consciousness. These two are, in a sense, incarnation and inspiration; so that the greater Incarnation—God in Christ, and the greater Inspiration—God in the Word—Holy Scripture, well comport themselves with our sacred persuasion that the true man is a pavilion of Deity, and that our intellect and emotion are candles lighted by the Lord.

The essence of our idea of God, of a First Cause, is that everything which exists is produced by Him; and that there is no period at which creation might not have taken place. The phenomena constituting the present order of nature, are the result of antecedents acting in unknown ways; and could we travel further and ever further back, we should arrive at direct operation by the First Cause; otherwise there is no First Cause. This philosophic certitude satisfies our reason.

On this foundation we erect our science. It is the great element in theology. The other practical causes of our belief, scientific and theologic, except in so far as the Divine Spirit works certitude of conviction, do not attain philosophic surety; but, nevertheless, are of so sufficing a nature that we do not even desire to be released from them. The assailants of religion are generally ignorant of the fact, that the premises of all their science are inferred, and not even yet properly determined; so that science, as to actual matter of proof, is worse off than theology; and, in so far as determined, explicitly known but to few persons. The need for science is of a specially imperative character, regulating our animal actions. The need for religious truth is one from which we would not if we could be freed: it belongs to the loftiest region of our moral nature, it is the spiritual life of millions—ignorant alike of science and philosophy, and it affords to man the only lasting satisfaction.

God has endowed man with attributes that we know are not matter—even as light, heat, gravity are not matter—but transformers of matter; something by which he rises above material nature, subdues its laws, possesses a human supernatural, and partakes of the Divine Nature (2 Pet. i. 4), in token of the Divine Supernatural. Man does not confine himself to finite things—nor can he: there are no limits, or if so, they are ever enlarging to the range of his activity. He traces the presence and the organic movement or process of reason in nature, and the world's progressive advancement. By thought he emerges from the narrowness of individuality, or nation, or age; and he seeks not so much what seems as what is, and why it is. Every

addition to real knowledge deepens our consciousness of the difference between seeming and reality—we shall not believe and cannot believe that our thought is shut out for ever from the Supreme Reality. Men ever have believed, do believe, will believe, that they can know God: not in His essence, but as the great thinkable, intelligent reality. Because God is a thinkable reality, He enters our thought. We do not create the thought, but our thought elicits the presence of rational relations in nature, and hence arrives at objective Reason as the ground of reality. This Permanent Unity beyond all things, discerned by science, is certainly that which the manifold phenomena of time and space and sense reveal to thinking creatures. It is folly to say He has no relation to thought, and is not apprehensible by thought, for if we are unable to conceive of the great unity, power, reality, truth—the Being whence all being emerges; then the basis of all things, of all intelligence, is virtually a blank non-entity, which is absurd. That the Supreme suffers diminution from reality by becoming relative to our finite thought is not true: a revelation of Godhead is the realization in nature of Divine Thought. Our perception of that Divine Thought conducts us to the highest and fullest realities of our own life. Pure thought takes to itself a logic of genius, and by exact furthest exercise of imagination, which it leads out with enlarging intelligence, attains rich and full content in a "peace that passeth understanding," a "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Materialists attribute to matter all the properties usually counted spiritual; drag invisible and heavenly things down to earth, do not advance our knowledge,

for they declare that nothing is real but what we strike against and touch, forgetting that these properties prove that energy has entered and abides within matter. Now if energy enters matter, and constructs the worlds by atomic and molecular arrangement, uses microscopic living workers of whom twenty-seven millions and more live and labour within an inch of space, are we to account their insignificance the cause of the world's magnificence? Is man, who finds that every human handy-work is graven with man's device, to say that the skilled work of the universe was wrought without skill; or that the intelligence comes from those little labourers who have no mind nor will? Certainly not. Sydney Smith was at a dinner-party with an atheist who argued against the evidence of design in the world. Presently this man praised a pudding very much. Sydney Smith said, "You find the pudding good, sir; pray do you believe in the cook?" The universe is a vast visible embodied plan. Nor is that all: vegetable life contains, so to speak, a soul in the bud; animal life, *anima bruti*, is the soul looking out of the windows of sense; in man there is a sparkling and glitter of intelligence—a very lamp of God. We shall never cease to believe that the body of man—understood in the highest sense—is a divine incarnation; and that the spirit—so advanced beyond all other things—is, pre-eminently, a manifestation of the Holy Ghost.

This blessed Light, part of our nature, enlightening us so that we trace the past; and possess the future;

> "ἄπορος ἐπ' οὐδὲν ἔρχεται τὸ μέλλον"
>
> SOPHOCLES, *Antig.*, 359.

is, in itself, a guarantee that we shall not go down to

death eternal (2 Tim. i. 10). The vast tide of human will, emotion, intelligence, God-consciousness, wrought in us by Inspiration and Revelation, so overflows the material margin of our earthly existence, that even while in the flesh we possess knowledge and assurance concerning a Diviner Kingdom. Refusing the error of attempting to grind the sacred mysteries of religion, and the noblest sentiments of human nature, out of the habits and instincts of lowest animals, we accept, apart from his pantheistic error, the saying of Seneca, "Quid aliud vocas animam quàm Deum in humano corpore hospitantem?"

"The God within the mind."
POPE, *Essay on Man*, ii. 204.

"Quis Deus incertum est, habitat Deus."
VIRGIL, *Æneid*, viii. 352.

"Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo."
OVID, *Fast.*, vi. 6.

What less can you call the soul than God condescending to dwell in a house of clay? Those who think that the genius of great men can be chemically explained by productions within or outside Leyden-jars, or as a result of phosphorus, ought to consider the ancient moralist's words—"Ratio nil aliud est quam in corpus humanum pars Divini Spiritûs mersa"—Reason is somewhat of a Divinity immersed in flesh. They will do well to remember that mind, viewed even in very low scientific sense, cannot be handled and dealt with as a palpable object. The molecular, chemical, vital processes of the nervous elements of the brain, are not a material jumble; but by a going forth of energy from some mysterious source, inspiring and moving organic

growth throughout the Earth, generating man's highest powers and bestowing genius. Lord Bacon well observes, "The soul of man was not produced by heaven or earth, but was breathed in immediately from God: so that the ways and proceedings of God with spirits are not included in nature, that is in the laws of heaven and earth, but are reserved to the laws of His secret will and grace." Indeed, it is our sense of the evanescence and unreality of earthly things that leads us by an inward impulse, at once of feeling and reason, to that high and true Infinite who is not unknowable, but unknown in this sense—In Him is more that is admirable than we can grasp, an intelligence so much above our own as to awake within us a sense of our own littleness.

Spirit, that by which we enter the unknown unfathomable depths of Being filling us with humility and awe, is the life of our spiritual or resurrection body (1 Cor. xv. 44); and as in virtue of the æther that fills space and pervades matter we behold remotest stars and measure astronomical distance by comparing angles, so that all things in the starry system appear as if they were nigh at hand; in like manner, by medium of the spirit, we recall the past, anticipate the future, and make the two into one now. This spiritual faculty enables us to think of Infinitude, of the Reality beyond the finite, of the Eternal in whom are "hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

At present we possess this peculiar endowment subject to the narrowness limiting human minds: we have great variety of ideas only by succession. No man is able to hold together all his knowledge, and set it con-

stantly before him in one picture. Even those with prodigy of parts and of wonderful memory, like Pascal, though they have a whole handful of truth can open only a finger. Science reveals that our present corporeal organization, which seems but a transient appendage to our spiritual humanity, possesses optical, auditory, and other nerves, which are not fully nor perfectly used. These seem premonitions of powers not yet possessed, but sure to come unless nature works in vain; "οὐδὲν ἀργὸν ἐποίησεν ἡ φύσις" (Aristot.); "Natura nihil temere producit" (S. Augustine). They are manifestations of probability that our capacities of knowledge may become so extensive, that we shall behold the Christian Dispensation in not less analogy and conformity with the whole world, than is the visible and material course; the spiritual body will appear natural as the material body, and the building up of the inner man be found analogous to the principle of growth which constructs the outer man. Even now we smile at those who assert—"God is a mystery absolutely and for ever beyond your comprehension." Our reverence is not for a blank inscrutability, but for an intelligence essentially the same as our own, though far excelling our highest ideal of spiritual excellence. Ours is no ignorant wonder, but an intelligent admiration growing and ennobled by renewed impulses that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all," whom to know is eternal life.

This principle of growth, if we regard the inner mental and emotional process, is more complicate in character than mere material growth; an exception sometimes to each order of things, the natural and spiritual, taken separately, but in accurate keeping with

both taken together, and it establishes a relation within nature. Relation by means of responsible emotional intelligence soaring into transcendent heights to possess whatever intelligence discerns, or nature reveals. That soaring may sometimes obtain conceptions of the Supernatural, even as from within the body and mind we apprehend that which is without, and the relation will be real. It will afford proof that as it is impossible, in naturals, to create a grain of sand out of nothing, it is equally impossible to create a thought of spirituals out of nothing. We lay aside the silly notion that there are mental miracles, though physical are impossible, and take the common-sense fact—the universal conviction that something exists beyond, above, essentially separate from, yet intermingling with and containing nature; a fact of weight equal to the other, that the visible world is framed of some real essential substance—the permanent reality underlying all phenomena. The duality of fact, thus possessed by unity of thought, renders the Infinite as clear and positive an element in our consciousness as the finite, and the Absolute as the relative.

This high illumination of intelligence throws light on our present state, proves man to be a responsible citizen of two cities; exhibits him in a natural and supernatural relationship; subjects him to the laws of matter and to the laws of mind; enables him, in the use of freedom, to act by each on both; and, more or less, by truthful discernment and use of causes, to separate himself from the sensual and control the spiritual. He is enabled to comprehend that he occupies a place of trial, passes through a series of temptations, probably peculiar to him, and not known to any other earthly creature, in order that he

may become a type of voluntary faithfulness to God, and resist the power of evil. This continual exercise of freedom greatly enforces and ensures the accordance of common faith with common sense: for as the source of nature is the origin of all truth, and the system of nature is a true system, our intelligence being a true representative of nature is, when rightly using its liberty, in harmony with nature, and in union with nature's God.

Man is like one of those meteoric stones coming from other and distant realms to enter our world. He is like one temporarily imprisoned within a seven-walled kingdom of darkness—

". . . clausus tenebris et carcere cæco,"

that he may be an example and a proof how voluntary use of natural power and divinely given grace obtains substantial freedom. He is a likeness or an embodiment of conscious responsible personality, a symbol of the infinite eternal personal Existence.

He has peculiarity of position with duality of nature, and from the Earth's standpoint dominates the universe, because of the everywhere underlying element of thought or reason—the distinctive characteristic of man. His spirit rises into aspiration, reverence, communion with the invisible and eternal, even before it is compelled by intellectual instinct to deal with religion as an object of thought. The present certainly contains potentiality of future possession: for nothing exists in vain. There is in nature, in all intelligent things, in all intelligible objects, a deeper unity than that which meets the eye. It is comprehensiveness of principle underlying variety

of phenomena, advancing to the reconciliation of opposing elements, that all differences may be embraced and harmonized. The universe is one vast cathedral in which all worlds and all things do service, a majestic whole resting on the triple foundation of Wisdom and Might and Goodness.

A linked purpose unites the universe. Every particle of matter has outer form, inner permanence, external and internal media, joining it to this world, linking it to all other worlds and to every kind of existence. In a sense, while on the earth, it climbs the skies; in a sense, the very commonest stuff of the universe possesses body and soul. Nor is that all—take any physical substance and fact, say fire, water, combustion; water quenches fire, yet water is essentially fiery, and each from each may be extracted; fire from water, water from fire. They may be life, or they may be death, to one another; apart, or in union, they are solvents of each; and by action, interaction, joint action, control seasons, change existences, rule and suspend laws, even that of gravity. Likewise, man, both as to body and mind, is subject to law, but can rise above it. He has a power of self-differentiation, adapts and perfects himself by divergencies. Again—Chemical union changes the nature of constituents; so the more mysterious union of matter and mind in regenerate man forms that amalgam which, by physical and mental process, effects transformations in matter, elevation of laws, resurrections of life from the dead, which render the miracles of Christ small, as He Himself testified, in comparison with those hereafter to be wrought. Not the least of miracles is that richness, vastness, concreteness of thought and faith, by

which religion and science, each in its own province, restores the secret unity of phenomena: so that we anticipate the final synthesis, or reasoned unity of the world, and the human spirit, our true self, is at home in the life and being of God.

Miracles are master-works, lights in nature, prophecies of a sublime rule by glorified Humanity. In their actuality, resting on nature; in their essentiality, partaking of that which, out of and apart from nature, pervades nature; on one side, anomalies; on the other, enterings of energies to enlarge mental and material forces. "Miracle is no suspension of law; it is the emergence of new consequents from new antecedents. What is law? The observed customary relation of consequents to antecedents; but if new antecedents be introduced, new consequents will follow" (Griffiths, "Studies of the Divine Master," p. 411). Miracles are operations accentuating, elevating, somewhat akin or analogous to those which raise formless matter into crystals, the dead into life, and life into intelligence. They are a signature and counter-signature of the Almighty, by which He owns men as His; yet restrains them, lest they regard nature as ordained by Fate rather than by Intelligence. Profound logic which seeks the genesis, and traces the evolution and secret rhythm of thought, discerns in miracle constituent elements of that living process by which truth energizes intelligence. The value of a member in the living organism is shown by its being a means and end in all the rest: so the intellectual and moral idea of miracle, its all-sufficient justification, is the emphasizing the fact that eternal order and system do not originate or end of themselves, are

not necessities of nature, but come from Him who is at once the source and consummation of all things, the essence of truth; who proves by miracles that the supernatural is not a territory secluded from philosophy, but a domain revealed to reason.

Only men whose reason has been somewhat narrowed by limitation to physical processes, who prove the Italian proverb—"Puro matematico puro asino," refuse these facts: men like him who, having read through "Paradise Lost," said, "But what does it prove?" Our best men, those of highest culture, moulded into completeness by far-reaching intellectual and emotional activity, discern that evil and seeming waste will be turned to good and use; that the earth is not a rubbish-heap thrown upon marshy land. Their faith is not kindled by fiery terror of a brimstone lake, a light of Lucifer; it is an illumination of reason, and grows into brightness of assured verification. It will never sink to ineffectuality, or gloom, nor lie down in the wreck of worlds. It is a far-extending intelligence as to the Ways of Providence and the Love of God. It is that devout activity of the mind, in correlation with the divine process of self-revelation, which enables the finite to apprehend the Holy and Eternal: not by motion towards the Infinite, which is impossible, but by moving within.

THOUGHT XXVI.

THE GOD-MAN.

"Thou seemest human and Divine,
The highest, holiest Manhood, Thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

In Memoriam.

"If Christ, Himself, be not a mystery from His birth, through His life, to His death and reappearance and final vanishing out of sight, He can be no Christ for us. We may as well cease at once to write, speak, think, or care about Him at all."—THOMAS GRIFFITHS, *Studies of the Divine Master*, p. 407.

CARLYLE says, "As I take it, Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the history of the Great Men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modellers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators. . . . This is an age that as it were denies the existence of great men; denies the desirableness of great men. Show our critics a great man, Luther for example, they begin to do what they call account for him; not to worship him, but to take the dimensions of him,—and bring him out to be a little kind of man." Melancholy work, false work, dead work is this, done by the make-believe sort of men; who, not being kindled lamps

themselves, would have us think that neither by God's gift, nor by any other's gift, do we have moral and spiritual luminaries shining by the light of Heaven.

Great men are real, grand in themselves—"In iis quasi lumina quædam probitatis et virtutis perspicere videmur" (Cicero, "De Amicit")—not creatures of circumstances, but more frequently makers of opportunity. Poets, great in splendour of imagination, pouring forth words sparkling with passionate beauty, give gorgeous array and divinity of inspiration to the commonest things of life. The truly great are profitable company, we can hardly look upon them—certainly not be with them without gaining something. Even a sentence of rhythm and melody, musically worded, possesses something deep and good in the meaning; much more a life which can greatly dare and nobly die, in which body and soul, language and idea, are gracefully linked in truth and power.

The Great Man is a force in nature which subdues and transcends nature. He gives expression to hopes, feelings, power, latent in the human race. He perceives a want—has ability to supply it; a wrong, and has strength to redress it. He establishes a perfection, not exceeded but exemplified by others' progress. For power, highest reach and widest range of mental and spiritual capacity, some of the ancients have not even yet been surpassed. Which sculptor excels Phidias? Do modern poets possess more imagination than Æschylus and Homer? The writer of the Book of Job soars whither the genius of our own day can hardly follow. David and Isaiah in holy pathos, gentleness yet force, simplicity and sublimity, transcend all sacred

singers and divines of present culture. As instruments of thought the ancient Greeks and their language were almost perfect. All greatness contains depth and height —not mechanically explainable; the genesis is unseen, and when devout always spiritual; thought and emotion modifying, enlarging, beautifying, the outward and material.

Such a man—the hero, is warrior, legislator, reformer, scourge of tyrants, universal benefactor, who brings as facts into the region of reality the wants, ideas, emotions, of ordinary humanity. He is a man of faith, lays to heart his duty in our mysterious world, the manner in which he is, or feels himself to be, spiritually related to the invisible universe, and he uses life, in all its faculties, as a contribution towards making some highway to that unseen. He is no sceptic: for, whatever be the intellectual doubts, moral doubts and insincerity, the black malady and life-foe of every age, have no place in him. Kant, an intellectual doubter, was no sceptic in morality. Faith makes the great man brave in the battle-field, sustains him at the stake, and bears him up, though the martyrdom be long and weary as the whole of a saddened life.

Those who see nothing but dead mechanism in the universe — checks, balances, cranks, levers; whose "Doctrine of Motives," however much disguised, gives wretched love of pleasure, or fear of pain, hunger for applause, money, earthly advantage, as the great factors of human life; are never great. Bacon ("Essay on Atheism") says, "Atheism is in all respects hateful, so in this, that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty." All an atheist

manages to believe in is what he can measure and weigh, eat and digest, or clothe himself withal; lower can no man go, yet remain rational—possess no God, not even a devil! So he accomplishes what the devil would have him do—"Le chef-d'œuvre des mauvais esprits c'est de s'être fait nier par ce siècle." It is the mournfulest and meanest of all conditions; it renders life a base creeping towards a hopeless future; it makes all talk about virtue and high motive a poor sentimental vapouring — plausible quackery. No such scantily furnished, spiritually paralytic man, is a hero. To the hero the world is instinct with Godhead, and life is the seed-time of eternity. The hero, by spiritual instinct, knows that capacity for greatness—greatness to be won by all mankind, is the fact which renders elevation and advance actual and possibly universal. Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, felt that the impulse which emulates and reverences greatness is the divinely laid substratum on which rests Redemption by Christ, is the principle to which Revelation appeals, is that which makes the Christian Mystery reasonable.

The best of sceptics is incomplete. A man of mere intellect, however great and powerful that intellect, is inharmoniously developed:* the gentler and tenderer affections are starved and chilled. Though a kind father,

* Bossuet (sermon sur l'honneur): "Ceux là pensent être les plus raisonnables qui sont vains des dons de l'intelligence . . . ils font un des plus beaux ornements du monde; mais qui pourrait les supporter, lorsque aussitôt qu'ils se sentent un peu de talent, ils fatiguent tontes les oreilles, et pensent avoir droit de se faire écouter sans fin, et de décider de tout souverainement? O justesse de la vie! O égalité dans les mœurs! O mesure dans les passions! riches et véritables ornements de la nature raisonnable, quand est-ce que nous apprendrons à vous estimer!"

professed or even real philanthropist, he is as a bird without power of flight; for he neglects, starves, the highest, the best, the religious aspirations of his nature. He is as a man who keeps his spirit, as was said of Humboldt, "within an iron safe." He seems to adopt as maxim—"Il faut penser, il ne faut pas croire"—"The greater the knowledge the greater the doubt." It is questionable whether any such man would count any opinion certain enough, any truth sure and good enough, to be worth dying for. Find a man of intellect who does not assert that the noble army of martyrs greatly blundered—he has already added pure emotion to his intellect, and begins to be spiritually minded.

As for God, unto whom the thoughts of all spiritually minded men soar and find content, we must conclude that He possesses, as Leibnitz says, "The qualities of a good governor, as of a great architect;" and the point of connection at which Divine Power comes into contact and government with the chain of natural causation may be the first link, running thence, as a fine electrical influence, through every link and every part of a link. In any case, all natural phenomena are sustained by the unseen Power. This Power, establishing ordinary agency—"God cannot leave His creation a moment" (E. Thring, "Life Science"), is still more the source of extraordinary; a great man is extraordinary, and eminently God's man. He will give up his whole life for the welfare and improvement of other men: even as God, who spent ages in fitting the earth to be a dwelling for men, will spend ages more in fitting men for a renovated earth.

The great and good man represents in nature some-

thing that has no inherent limit by nature: for he greatly rules nature, and has a more intimate relation with the unseen world than other men possess. To the simple-minded he was, of old, as a god: they believed that he was near to, if not a part of, Divinity.

"Θεός δ' ὥς τίετο δήμῳ."
HOMER.

"τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς ἀρετὴν ἡρωικήν τινα καὶ θείαν."
ARISTOTLE, *Ethics*, vii. 1.

"I might call him a thing divine."
SHAKESPEARE.

"To these wild Norse men he was a work of miraculous unexpected blessing, a god" (Carlyle). To the scientific mind of our day, he is a genius; and in the unfolding of his mind towards Divinity, a prophet; sacredly using the gift, he may be statesman, poet, artist; or world-mover by means of eloquence or arms. There is a sort of universal conviction, that as every ray of light is a child of the sun, every dew-drop a model of the ocean; so the smile of human intelligence is a gleam, which in the mind and countenance of a great man shines as Divine illumination. Of holy Stephen it is said, "They saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

Highest and purest greatness displays self-sacrifice —not degradation of the higher for elimination of imperfection from the lower, but a multiplying of graces and virtues by subtracting selfishness; free and noble exercise of love to rescue the perishing. Amongst the heathen it arose chiefly from a sense of moral and physical evil, of injustice—its misery and wrong—

"ἥδε γὰρ ψυχὴ πάρα
ἑκοῦσα κ' οὐκ ἄκουσα· κἀξαγγέλλομαι
θνήσκειν ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε κἀμαυτῆς ὕπερ·
εὕρημα γάρτοι μὴ φιλοψυχοῦσ' ἐγὼ
κάλλιστοι ἡυρηκ', εὐκλεῶς λιπεῖν βίον."

EURIPIDES, *Heraclidæ of Macaria.*

"πῶς δ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἐνδείξαιτό τις
πόσιν προτιμῶσ' ἢ θέλουσ' ὑπερθανεῖν."

Alcestis.

Making their gods in human form, though they had no sense of God emptying Himself of glory, was by a premonition of Incarnation and Immortality. Their heroes are great men lifted up, but Christ is God brought down. Thus Christianity, confirming human hope, is an original unexpected method, not a human fabrication. Their sense of the necessity of self-sacrifice arose also from the conviction of sin and dread of punishment. The dread itself being regarded as a premonition; the desire of pardon, the yearning for holiness, is already a partial possession of immortality: in a sort, the return of the finite consciousness into union with the Infinite. Moreover, the true idea of self-sacrifice—that most honouring to God and ennobling to man—elevates the whole spiritual nature into conscious intelligent sympathy with all suffering. These natural emotions, natural because so common, are the basis of all true religion; are promptings that lead to faith in some Redemption; they establish the intellectual and moral conviction of a Divine Kingdom and King. This King became personal and incarnate in the Divine Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The law of the Cross, formulated purest goodness and noblest self-sacrifice, received highest embodiment

in "the Form of God" who became a servant that He might raise the lowly, give them of His own life, of His own spirit, and eternal happiness. Few understand the mystery and power of self-denial, or have full faith in the might of self-sacrifice. Jesus is the sublimest of all who ever trod the earth. No one is equal to Him—no ideal man has been found worthy to carry His shoes. Natural selection would extinguish the feeble, blighted, maimed forms of life—by crushing them out: Jesus saves, strengthens, and ennobles them. The worldly man says, as were it a law not to be overcome—"the weakest goes to the wall;" whereas, men with the Spirit of Christ, the holy, pure, and able, know that every act of wise self-sacrifice for the weak and the miserable, is a transfer from their own strength, wealth, happiness—is a breathing of their own life, love, spirit, into the feeble—by which these are raised and strengthened to see God. Self-denial by the rich, and not by the rich only, is the best means that we can use for the prevention and cure of misery; the most efficient and, probably, an absolutely necessary instrument for elevating our race to intelligent sympathy with the Holy Mind and Will.

If not in accordance with pure reason and the high expectations of our race, that the Everlasting should give Divinity to self-denial—manifest Himself in our flesh—be a Divine Humanity, why did all nations believe that the great and pure hero is a God-like man? Not that it ever entered either Jewish or Gentile mind, apart from Revelation, that it was a work peculiarly Divine for the great man to lower himself in efforts to rescue from ruin the ignorant and degraded; and that it

specially belonged to the holy to make other men partakers of perfection; nevertheless, the hero-principle unconsciously verifies the divine promise of a Deliverer —one absolutely unselfish. Read the Gospels, again and again; you cannot detect any fault or touch of selfishness either in His actions or teachings. His character was a manifestation of something superhuman which, finding the latent in man, called it forth to act with might. He proved what men had dimly thought —high sacrifice partakes of Divinity. Ancient mind was full of conceptions concerning gods coming as men, but the Christ, whom Christians adore, surpasses all that is merely human; His Incarnation affirms the twofold truth that, in some way exceedingly beneficial to us, God is like man, and the true man is like God. "We have no other word wherewith to express it; we speak after the manner of men; nor could we understand if we heard any of those unspeakable words which express the Divine Nature in its proper essence; therefore we must make allowances, and great ones, when we apply words of our nature to the Infinite and Eternal Being" (Leslie, "Method with the Deists"). It is nearly two thousand years since the actual historic manifestation; but the miracle, though more fully believed in, is rather greater than less. We are more capable of discernment as to the reality: for now, that we scientifically regard the universe as a whole, we see that it is also, in every atom, that material garment with which the Eternal clothes His energy. In the intelligence of creatures, in genius—science—art—literature—design —are manifestations of the Supreme Mind. One step in truth is one step from sin, one step from sin is one

step nearer to Heaven. It was Plato who said, "Truth is the body of God . . . Light is His shadow." We discern somewhat more clearly than did our forefathers, that human nature, as conscious of God, is in itself an incarnation; grandly, beautifully, sacredly, summed up in Christ. The three great Revelations of God—in the World, in Literature, in Flesh—stand plainly before us in Creation, in Scripture, in Christ.

Time did not call Christ forth, nor was He the creature of circumstance. An event not evoked by nature is a miracle, and an event not caused by the moral forces of the universe is a moral miracle. Time often calls loudly for great men, many wish that spirits came from "the vasty deep," but there are none to answer; and Circumstance often diminishes the great one if he comes, and makes him like the many small. If Time and Circumstance could always discern and find a great man, the world need never go to ruin. '

Jesus, then, the God-man, was not an evolution. In outward condition a peasant, born and nurtured amongst a people whose narrow exclusiveness provoked contempt from the ancient world, His supreme attractiveness of character, spiritual illumination, and mental power, could not have been merely human. If they were human, it is a miracle that men who reject all tyrannies call Him Lord, and say, "Jesus is perfect: He stands alone in unapproachable grandeur, nineteen centuries roll away and His character so lives that He inspires millions of men with impassioned love. Other men may seem to be children of their surroundings, He became what He was despite surroundings, and is the only one who can say in truth and holiness—'Do as I have

done.'" Great men, the inventors of useful arts, prophets, poets, do not, as a rule—although strength is to the strong and wisdom to the wise—produce extraordinary children; they rather exhaust the honoured family. It is frequently found that great men are not children of the great. Atavism, meaning the occasional reappearance of rare forms and powers, does not explain—it only states the fact. Without any adequate assignable cause, great men appear by an interruption, a suspension, or an elevation of our nature. The earth may not tremble at the birth of a gifted infant, nor the face of heaven shine with fiery portents, but a mighty thing has happened, and the mystery—a work of Providence—presents an enigma to science. See the grand moral presented in the Prometheus of Æschylus. Neither the shaking earth nor rending heaven, not the rock without nor vulture within, could cause regret for past good deeds, or terror of future evil, or envy of the dishonourable prosperity possessed by his insulter.

As to Christ—He, the ideal, the perfect of our race, appeared in an age when such an ideal could not have been developed in act—could not have been conceived in thought. In the Theory of Development, the perfection of humanity is the final result of man's history ages hence; Christ, therefore, is the great miracle which more than any other establishes the fact of miracles. Christ, Himself, is proof of His own miracles. "On the general fact that Jesus wrought wonders as well as spoke wisdom, there can be no indecision without an entire surrender of the whole Gospel History as no better than Arabian Nights' Tales . . . when S. Mark wrote down his account of marvellous occurrences, he

simply recognized God's hand stretched forth in them" (Griffiths, "Studies of the Divine Master").

Christ is not only mysterious, as are the greatest of men; He marched over the dead and living of all our race to a marvellous material, spiritual, moral, victory. He alone, of all men in the world, has inspired the heart of humanity with an impassioned love. He, the highest pattern of virtue and the highest incentive to its practice, has exerted so deep, so mighty, so universal an influence; that three years of His active life have done more to enlighten, soften, elevate mankind, than all the disquisitions of philosophers, than all the exhortations of moralists. Whatever is holy and true in Christian life comes from Christ. Despite the sins of the false and the failings of the true, amid the pride, presumption, and errors of the priest, notwithstanding the worldliness that creeps into every congregation, Christ remains in His nature, character, example, work, that enduring principle of life whence springs all regeneration. In Him humility was exalted to sublimity, and the profoundest depths of misery were fathomed and sanctified by personal suffering and sympathy. As a man of sorrow—yet the Son of God, All Holy—He lived and dwelt with us who are impure. He united essential grandeur with voluntary lowliness in taking upon Himself our life and death and sin. Poverty manifested—not debased humility. Temptation tried His nature, but shook not the inner temple of His mind. All that He loved failed Him, but He never murmured; His own virtue was all-sufficient. We glow in the contemplation of His character. Who, that has looked at Him, thinks that virtue to be loved must

allure with the offer of prosperity? A hundredfold more we adore Him because of His bitter sufferings; and find cause and explanation of the mystery—in the imputation of sin to Him as man (Isa. liii. 6), in His possession of righteousness as God (Rom. iii. 21, 22); in the girdle that encompassed Him with human infirmity (Heb. ii. 9, 10), yet mysteriously enfolded Him with the might of Divinity (Acts ii. 24).

As if by a law of our moral and spiritual being, all grand and lofty minds, all true and loving hearts, are drawn to Jesus; and to help humanity they labour, study, and suffer apparent loss. The highest summits of purity, the inner courts of wisdom, are ascended and entered by Christly men. To have our spiritual and intellectual elements of character in perfect harmony, with the fullest development of both, we must walk on earth as that One walked who came from heaven to make us sons of God.

Many thoughts arise in connection with so great a wonder; thoughts connected with the universe.

Our whole system of worlds, viewed by the most powerful telescope, possibly does not bear so great a relation to the entire universe as a single leaf to all the leaves of a forest: nor are we to imagine that Nature copies herself accurately and incessantly throughout space. There are many worlds, why not many sorts? why not a variety rich and manifold as the Divine perfections? Jesus, by taking flesh in so small a world as ours, makes us free of the universe, and opens out a prospect for enraptured spirits in many spheres. The Incarnation is not the encompassing of the Infinite, so

that the Incomprehensible may be possessed and embraced: it is the bringing of our earthly sphere within the heavenly, and the making our human nature that embodiment of the Holy and Mighty which conveys right and power to go through the gateways of sense, of intelligence, of emotion, to possess infinite and various glory in God. The Incarnation also shows that an Infinite Spirit participates in all life and intelligence, personally dwelling in the capable loving heart. Nor is that all—in Christ was no limit, His finitude of individual self entered and possessed the unlimited and universal. Talk no more of material beauties, of worlds shrined in dew-drops, miracles of splendour on butterfly-wing; they are as nothing to God manifest in the flesh; less than nothing to the glorious transformation and marvellous inner fashioning by which we are fitted to know and rejoice in the Almighty.

The Nature and Work of Christ, though wrought in nature, are preternatural and supernatural; because Redemption is essentially a work of Divine mercy, as Creation is a work of Divine might. On this account the Christ-life, and the Christ-death, transcend all other —enthrone Divinity of morality, and love stronger than death, in our existence. We do not see how to account for a Nature producing such marvellous moral results, or for the powers of a Mind so greatly influencing the world—"*Τί τούτων τῶν σημείων μεῖζον ἐπιζητεῖς, ἄνθρωπε, ἀθρόον τοσαύτην τῆς οἰκουμένης μεταβολὴν ὁρῶν γεγενημένην*" (S. Chrysostom); unless we allow that the owner of that Mind and Nature possessed peculiar qualification as Healer of Souls, as Seer of things invisible, as Divinity in communion with the Realities

of the universe. Looking at Sin, looking at the Atonement; our science and intellect, our conviction and emotion, say, "Man hath sinned and God hath suffered."

If we recognize this as the initial process for Divine rectification of existing wrong, the remedy for prevailing wretchedness, we shall also recognize the work which is given us to do; and so long as a man sees and believes in some great good, he will work toward that, come what may, in the way he is best fit for. Persistent sagacious efforts for the improvement of the moral and material condition of humanity on the earth, to be intellectually and morally right, to be spiritually, socially, physically happy, conduce to welfare and honour in present and in future life. When we so live in and by our Christianity, that with concentrated and urgent attention we elevate and transfigure the state of our land and people; that wise simplicity, divine purity, gentle peace, and gladsomeness, possess our country; we shall know the beginnings of that Good Time which was promised by Christ and sung by the poet—

> ". . . Golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
> With joy and love triumphing and fair truth."
>
> *Paradise Lost*, iii. 337.

Take the pictures of early life darkly drawn by Sir John Lubbock, the investigations of Darwin, the incidents of ancient and modern history, the common and uncommon facts of every life, and see whether a finished Salvation, which science calls "the progress and triumph of humanity," is not the grand truth which explains the mystery of creation, the mystery of evil, the mystery of miracle, and the mystery of redemption? The creation

we understand, humanly, as a Revelation of Godhead bringing fashioned substance—forms of life and beauty out of chaos. The existence of evil we tremble at—the voluntary faults of intelligent free creatures in rebellion against Supreme Holiness. The operations of miracle—Inspiration of the Bible, Incarnation Resurrection Ascension of Jesus, and Coming of the Holy Ghost—all redemptive, are a Divine amending of the fault, a Divinity of process by which our world will be restored and grandly embellished.

Creation, material and spiritual, can only be adequately understood when viewed as a display of the Almighty's attributes ; and we must think of it—not, as the technical scientist, from what is lowest but from that which is highest. The low cannot, unaided, exceed their nature, and ascend to the high—otherwise the less contains the greater ; but it is a property of the high that it can descend to the low, elevate, and make it partake of the descending greatness. The aspirations of men, our hungerings and thirstings after God, are not transformations of brutal passions into spiritual instincts, not dreams produced by indigestion, not illusions from the marshy ground of reptilian cravings : they are the breathings of our intellect and emotion, utterance in our language, embodiment in our acts, of that Holy Reality who gives variable substance, diverse life, ascending intelligence, sacred emotion, forming and informing the receptivity of His creatures. The Divine Narrative of Antiquity, concerning this, deserves reverence : as truth —it is the ground on which we stand, a sure and perfect way for our feet, and by it we make the great progression to Higher Life.

It follows from all this, that Jesus is the great original moral Worker and Thinker—unique in the world, "unus instar omnium," "εἷς ἀντὶ μυρίων." His comprehensiveness of character is rendered more wonderful by the consideration that His youth was spent in a small country town apart from the strife of politics, from the great questions of the age, and amongst simple uncultured men. He was in no respect like the Roman, who aimed at establishing national supremacy by force of arms, to make Rome the eternal city. In no particular did He resemble the Greek, who sought to subdue the earth by culture, by art, by science, by literature, by philosophy. Far from embodying the aims and aspirations of His own countrymen, He was, and ever has been, so opposed to their peculiar mode of thinking and conduct of life, that the nation generally, even unto this day, refuses Him though He stands far ahead—the greatest and best of all Jewish men. We study His life, and find in it a nature inexhaustible and infinite. Weeks and weeks we give to one phase of His character; we try to write it out—a more perfect and massive representation than that in the Gospels, but we cannot give the whole; there is always more, and when that is expressed there is still more. His nature, with its relations to heaven above and the earth beneath, in all its personal, social, moral, divine elements, seems Infinite. Parts that lay obscure, that escaped our minutest attention, suddenly shine in splendour, God's Spirit giving light.

The marvel grows in connection with His birth, manner of life, peculiar genius, extraordinary death, when we remember that He was the foretold, the expected, the miraculous, the Blessed and Blessing One.

He is all that now. His second Advent, His glorious Reign—as the One True King, praised and blessed of all, as He will be to the praise and blessing of the true, is foretold and expected, the One Miracle more, to crown and consummate all marvels. Now, while we wait, His beautifully shaped spoken thought awakes our slumbering human capacity into wonderful ideas of sacred transforming power. The likeness of God is restored, and the Holy Ghost, within spiritual men, gives beautiful grace and warmth to the whole by infusing the charities of Heaven.

Jesus of Nazareth, by His touch of nature, not only maketh all the world akin; but, uniting in His own Person the excellences of our race and the grandeur of Divinity, is that Light which lighteth every man; and is that Personality whom true Positivists ought to acknowledge as Divine Humanity—the embodied Spirit of Progress. His example touches us along the whole line of our life, in place of poverty imparts unsearchable riches, in barren places gives beauty and fruitfulness, His love bestows immeasurable fulness of every good—

> "Crown Him! Crown Him!
> Crowns become the Victor's brow!"

By this Personality, Jesus is constituted the true King of the true Human Kingdom. He has done best of all men for science and morality, for liberty and truth. His Spirit was in the piety and understanding of Galileo, not in the narrowness and malice of persecutors; in Kepler and Newton, not in their maligners' maligning. He transmits influence from generation to generation, enables disciples to imitate Him, and be the springs of progress to men. The

centuries and nations without Him are silent. All the works that are done in high faith, good hope, true love; the smith, here, with that metal of his; every craftsman with method of cunning; become sublime by the greater works, the love and faith and hope of Christ: He is the realization of Perfection, of Godhead, in our race. He makes that noblest of all ideas, "Immortality," a real thing; not only procures it, but brings it to light; and aggrandizes men into the happy capacity for it, by infusing them with His nature. All that we do and bring to pass in the way of true advance, is by effectuation of His thought, and in realization of His polity.

In Christ all are alive, out of Christ all are dead. Our London—whatever is good in houses and palaces, in shops and traffic, in engines and ships, in churches and cathedrals, in the skilled and grand realities of modern life, in all the potential essence of man—is the embodiment of Divine thought given through Him who was in the beginning with God, and is the Head of men. Who built Westminster Abbey? St. Paul's Cathedral? Look into the heart of the matter, it was that Divine Hebrew Man, who gave us true and loving conceptions of God. His art was not artifice; yet, He was the great Artificer who, by means of thought and love, the mightiest things that men possess, gathers around Him the world's intelligence and emotion. To those who believe in Him as more than man, there is no great wonder in it. He, splendidly gifted, possessed in manifold perfectness every excellence possible to humanity. He was not only the greatest moral Thinker, but the greatest Realizer of thought.

He meant, Jesus meant, that kings, priests, all man-

ner of persons, in public and private, should take His Word for their law; and be consciously under, willingly obedient to, the Government of God. The time will arrive when that He prayed for—"Thy kingdom come"—shall be universal Dominion. We who believe all the ages of the past were needful to make man what he now is, ought to be the most patient in waiting, and diligent in working for his development of this grand scheme of Imperial Rule. We will set our face toward our inheritance and home, prepare for our place amongst the ranks that encircle the Eternal Throne, possess in gladness that which Hesiod looked back to with regret—

> "ξυναὶ γὰρ τότε δαῖτες ἔσαν, ξυνοίτε θόωκοι
> Ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, καταθνητοῖς τ' ἀνθρώποις"—

not only nourish our own soul into the steady and enduring flame of a holy life, but carry many of our fellows with us to the threshold of that scene where the beholders never die. If we make our strenuous human efforts to be a translation of His Will into action, great things may be done—perhaps, soon done.

Put the thought into another form:—What some people call "Moral Evolution," "Spiritual Progress," is really effectuation by the Word of God. This Word, as in Holy Writ, regards the intelligence of the world; this Word, as in Jesus, regards the life and emotion of the world. Each has a special work, yet in both specialities is unity. The Written Word gives a spirit of knowledge, and the knowledge is power; the Personal Word confers ability to rule—by bringing into subjection. When the knowledge passes into power possessed by the masses who have become holy, when subjection to God has laid

hold of righteous dominion, there will be a change—as if we became dwellers in a palace; and the palace not strange, but our own familiar home—beautified and enlarged. The Earth will then become—a possession of the Saints under that true Emperor, to whom God committed the task "of expiating past sin;" and "all creatures, from the archangel in heaven to the worm on earth, shall bear witness unto Christ" (Edward Irving).

There is a light in men apart from Christ—a light flashing from natural character; but it is as light from a wandering star,

> "Stella facem ducens multa cum luce cucurrit;"
>
> VIRGIL, *Æneid*, ii. 694.

whose progress we view with anxiety and alarm. There is an influence exercised by the world, but we do well to harden ourselves against it: an influence the very reverse of that experienced by the king who said, "This preacher sends me home dissatisfied with myself;" and unlike that upon Alcibiades by Socrates, "I flee away as fast as possible that I may not sit down beside him, and grow old in listening to his talk; for this man has reduced me to feel the sentiment of blame, which I imagine no one could readily believe was in me; he alone inspires me with remorse and awe, for I feel in his presence my incapacity of refuting what he says, or of refusing to do what he directs." So would the world make us flee from Christ, but He wins and holds us, and is conquering the world. His language, full of emotion, comes from the Heart of hearts, and as the Italians said of Dante—"Eccovi l' uom ch' è stato all' Inferno"—we find true of Jesus concerning heaven, "His words were molten in the fire of His heart,

elaborated in His Divine intellect, and they came forth in intense earnestness, every one answering to the other in its own place." His Spirit going forth with them makes a world of heroes—men of His own moral image, bright and true, to be permanently and supremely glorious. He inspires us with thoughts too wonderful for utterance, and bestows a light which brings heaven within. He, the world's Healer, Restorer, Comforter, Glorifier, says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. xi. 28, 29). The very things which, seen alone, are despicable and vile, become, when associated with Him, venerable and divine. One cherished ray of holiness from the Son of Man and Son of God, shining on faith in the depths of affliction, sheds majesty over every image of suffering patience, and brightens the meanest of earth's localities with radiance from Heaven. As we look, and wonder, and worship, and praise, the mystery of sorrow is explained: after our afflictions we possess a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

"O sweet and blessed country,
The Home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country
That eager hearts expect!
Jesu, in mercy bring us
To that dear land of rest;
Who art, with God the Father,
And Spirit, ever blest. Amen."

THOUGHT XXVII.

MIRACLES OF THE PRESENT DAY.

"Certum est quia impossibile."—TERTULLIAN.

"Certainly testimony does not satisfy all the wants of the human mind in the matter of evidence, because upon the supposition that a most wonderful event of the deepest importance to us has taken place we have naturally a longing for direct and immediate knowledge of that event."—MOZLEY, *On Miracles*, p. 95.

MEN speak as if supernatural facts were altogether ghostly—

"... simulacra modis volitantia miris;"
VIRGIL, *Æneid*, vii. 89.

"Phantoms rising as the mists arise;"

fictions of credulity, of no definite or credible reality. Lecky ("Rationalism in Europe," vol. i. p. 1) says, "Nearly all educated men receive an account of a miracle taking place in their own day with an absolute and even derisive incredulity which dispenses with all examination of the evidence." To this we reply—that a miracle is possible at any moment, is the position those take who believe in the living God. This is not less a fact in science than a verity in theology. These educated men mean only to use the language of common sense; or to say with a little scorn, as Horace, in

Epicurean mood, when told at Gratin how that frankincense melted in the temple without fire—

"Credat Judœus Apella
Non ego."

This general incredulity may be justified by various facts.

Many asserted miracles, both of former and later times, are with good reason regarded as lying signs invented by craft, and believed in by ignorance. Further, it is well known that, apart from craft and credulity, a sudden and strong rousing of physical, or mental, or emotional energy, will expel disease, at least, temporarily; and action—not necessarily strong or sudden, whether we are conscious or unconscious of it—will at times evoke dreams and visions which are easily mistaken for signs and seals of the supernatural.

Simulations of miracles are also of easy manufacture. Even conjurors, who pretend to no supernatural power, and only wish to give innocent amusement, dazzle the eye and puzzle the intellect of the shrewdest. Spiritualists assert that, as if by revelation of a fourth and inner dimension of space, tables disappear from before their very eyes, lumps of coal are thrown by invisible hands, and limbs without trunks come into view. Persons in the hypnotic state, are will-less automata, do the silliest and absurdest acts. Consciousness can be separated from the senses, and then men, unconsciously, do marvellous things. Bitter may be taken for sweet, and sweet for bitter, every sense will belie itself. Dr. Rudolf Heidenhain partially explains hypnotic delusion by the statement that it arises from—"In-

hibition of the activity of the ganglion-cells of the cerebral cortex." * Mr. Friedländer, a medical student who had been often hypnotized, was told one first of February morning, that precisely at four o'clock in the afternoon he would, in his own room, on looking at the clock, be magnetized by means of influence acting from a distance. He was so magnetized.† An hour may be specified and a place appointed at and to which a person can be made to go unwittingly. Adding wonder to wonder, one side of a person may be rendered independent of his will by production of unilateral hypnosis. In this state, according to the statement of Professor Cohn, a person—naturally and completely colour-blind—may distinguish colours.‡ Athanasius Kircher communicated influence to a fowl, so that the bird lay motionless on the ground with its beak resting against a chalked line. Czermak so influenced a crayfish that it stood motionless on its head.§

If these strange things are wrought by inhibition of cerebral activity, doubtless a similar inhibition, or an unwonted exhibition of cerebral activity, may lead to the seeing and doing of that which the seer and doer may deem miraculous. The reported marvels performed in the presence of sacred relics, or in the course of pilgrimage to some holy place, are not all delusions—they may have been wrought under excitement. We can accept every one, and yet give a true scientific physiological and psychological explanation which wholly separates them from the supernatural.

Shall we then say, miracles have ceased? That all

* "Animal Magnetism," Dr. Rudolf Heidenhain, p. 49.
† Ibid., p. 86. ‡ Ibid., p. 98. § Ibid., Preface, p. x.

nowaday marvels are but natural; that, God having spoken by His Son, miracles are no longer needed? S. Chrysostom seems to speak as if, in his day (about A.D. 380), miracles were unnecessary, adding, that this did not prove they had always been so—"Μὴ τοίνυν τὸ μὴ γίνεσθαι νῦν σημεῖα, τεκμήριον ποιοῦ τοῦ μὴ γεγενῆσθαι τότε. Καὶ γὰρ τότε χρησίμως ἐγίνετο καὶ νῦν χρησίμως οὐ γίνεται" ("Epist. ad Corin.," Hom. vi.). To everything there is a season; a time for miracles to be wrought, and a time for them not to be wrought. We very well understand that for the revelation and establishment of Divine Truth miracles should be a sort of bell rung in men's ears bidding them mark and learn—"Miracula necessaria fuerunt, antequam crederet mundus, adhoc ut crederet mundus" (S. Augustine, "De Civitate Dei"). Now, however, that the Church is established; and is itself, we Christians assert, a miraculous proof of Christ's Kingdom; we may say that we need no other influence than that of the ordinary and continuous operation of the Holy Ghost—the greatest of all miracles; that the divine building is erected—the scaffolding may be taken away. Believers are made, are helped, are taught, by the inner work of God the Spirit; not by the outer work of physical marvels; miracles may have ceased. Modern miracles are discredited for the reason that, for the most part, the more searchingly they are investigated the more convincingly they may be disproved; so convincingly, indeed, that men of a sceptical mind regard even the ancient miracles with suspicion.

We now reverse the thought: Miracles Have Not Ceased.

It is not certain, because some marvels are explain-

able, that all are natural or fictitious. That must be a peculiar sort of mind which cannot admit that the false often implies the true. Every alleged miracle must rest on its own evidence. Miracles are not like nine-pins which knock one another down. We may suppose that since the days of our Lord and the Apostles there have been few and with the roll of ages fewer marvels: but this may result from the fact that the great miracle of Christianity is Christ: the fewness also of other miracles may have resulted from our want of faith. The promise of miraculous signs was not so much for the Apostles, as for those who should believe by their means (Mark xvi. 17, 18); nor is it true that miracles would be useless now—a few well tested and attested amongst scientific men might be greatly beneficial. This, of course, is but supposition. We cannot see far enough to know for certain what is beneficial in the long run. Ahaz and the Pharisees both showed want of faith: the one by refusing to ask for a sign, the other by asking for one. There may be long intervals during which miracles cease, and there is no open vision as between the days of the prophets of Judah and the coming of our Lord. John the Baptist, though he came in the spirit of Elijah, the worker of miracles, did no miracles. The modern Church seems in darkness, with feeble and ineffective grasp on the powers of the unseen world. We live, we are told, in an age of common sense; perhaps we put common sense in the place of faith. Common sense is of inestimable value, yet it is no disgrace to it that it cannot do the works of faith. The Scriptures assure us that, in the last days, our holy men are to receive miraculous spiritual might; perhaps even the

present time may not be wholly destitute of such power. Science reveals an eternal all-pervading Power, capable of performing miracles, whose action in ordinary course we deem natural; and whose operation unveiled by special act we term supernatural. In striving to obtain knowledge, or use of the supernatural, ideas, like plants, spread out and are fruitful in proportion to the size of the vessel enclosing their roots. Faith is known to have so much power, even in mere earthly things, that let a man be firmly persuaded he is born to do that which now seems impossible, and the impossible is well-nigh sure to be done. Of such men it may be said—possunt quia posse videntur. Let things not much better even than vague aspirations and self-conceits be bound together by practical necessity, or be elevated into good resolve, and some grand labour will be wrought in the world. Ages of faith do great things, grotesque sometimes and exaggerated, yet striking, picturesque, fruitful of good. The days of unbelief may be strong in worldly sense and prudence, inventive of arts of comfort and luxury; but there is sure to be a want of what is noble and generous. Every man of faith knows that all lives are a wonderful poem—every page in a different language, and is sure that some lexicon, older than the confusion of tongues at Babel, interprets the universal language—the language of the heart: for

"Multæ terricolis linguæ, cœlestibus una."

Observe that swart ill-visaged man at the dock for trial, witnesses depose that he is a wretch, a horrible murderer; but the advocate rises, lifts the veil from that assassin's heart and mind: "Lo! he is Othello the Moor."

That man excites general sympathy. We know that his appeal lies with the Righteous. How is it, moreover, that nature is as we ourselves interpret? Joyous are we, then the sun seems Life-giver. Hope for fame, the stars are its promise. If when we mourn and say to the earth, "I have done with thee;" and to life and time, "Ye are nought;" sun, stars, all space, cry to the truly faithful—"the earth is a speck, the true inheritance is infinite, time is the priestess of eternity." Life seems dull at times now; but take away faith in the Supernatural—how utterly flat and unmeaning and purposeless would it be: the beginning of it a delusion, the middle of it a striving in vain, the end a lame and impotent conclusion! Spiritual yearning—whether of savage or sage, the discontent of every mortal, is the instinct that proves immortality, and thrills our nature with the sense of divinity; a miracle is wrought every moment, and must be; what would be left of life were it bereft of the miraculous?

In some sad lives, past—present—future—seem to blend in one desolation, as a land after a flood, a field after a day of battle, is the scene of distress. Another strange thing, all time converges into the burning-glass of a moment. There are foresights of that last view of life in which some say our whole life is visible to the glazing eye. Again, men do great Promethean things that work new worlds in nature, change well-nigh all human life, blessing or cursing future generations: some are angels, others—very devils. A grand thought was that, "Matter is the gigantic slave of Mind." Thought? what a mystery is thought! It seems the real of man, and a miracle-power. There are moments in which wastes of misery,

or vast scenes of joy, seem a whole existence—as if to warn us that to memory, always active, time will never be done. Sometimes we feel that if the path be chosen, fate is decided: yet, we have excuses. Lord Lytton said that to other people, "Our life is somewhat like those skeleton abridgments of history which we give to children"—thoughts and emotions, the men of our heart; gain, loss, success, failure, the inhabitants of our inner city; are utterly unknown to all outsiders. Events and passions hurry on, from epoch to epoch in peculiar idiosyncrasy, to frustrate or effect our purpose; and, in defiance of fate, to that purpose we resolutely cling. Then we have gleams of some strategic policy by which the pain and humiliation are directed against our pride, our folly, our sin, our want of love and faith: a policy overruling all things to create, develop, and adorn virtues —while covering the faults of which sorrow makes us conscious. Take the case of any man, is he not, in some respects at least, Heaven's favoured son? Affliction centres its work within the secret heart; and the wisest does not always know why, or by what means, God is admonishing and persuading that weeds may be drawn from the ground of a soul that ought to be rich in flowers. The sacrifice of earthly happiness, of worldly repute, may be ordained: for, if warning chastisements do not avail, slowly but pertinaciously, quickly yet justly, the Holy One proceeds to develop our true nature. Men, so wrought upon, are of heroic deed and self-sacrifice. They justify the ways of God to man. Their life, in its essence, is miraculous; rounds itself off from all other, yet with all other is joined. All ordering of Providence, whether general or particular, national or individual, is a miracle.

We talk of the spirit of the age. The phrase does not explain the meaning, nor how the age has a spirit, nor why it is not the same in one age as in another. Spirit of the age is but the momentary life in our fellowship of clay, a pulsation of the great organism—human existence. Amalgamated peculiarities stamp the eras with speciality, are particles in continuous flow through the arteries of being from generation to generation. As dew-drops contain the mysteries which, aright understood, reveal the rise, decline, and fall of worlds; so the specialities which distinguish the lives of individuals —the grovelling of one, the awaking to venturesome romance in another, the passionate flow of zeal in this, the calm intelligent but often selfish aim at utility in the culture of science, are the tiny streamlets which unite to form the river of existence. Conjoined peculiarities create the spirit of the age: dark times, crusades, revivals of literature, worship of science, sensuous culture, display the hopes and fears, sins and sorrows, joys and worships of humanity. The poor and low labour with the small mean aims of mechanical insect life; the rich feast—the grave opens, and their paradise perishes. If God did not see the many frailties in both, He would not be so gracious to the small virtues of each. A true philosophy of human events and actions shows that the spirit of the age is but individual aim writ large; and this, so far as it is good, connects itself with that marvellous co-operation which, in essence, like Providence, whether general or particular, is miraculous: a co-operation in which our mind compares what the Spirit suggests, and human meditation and labour are added to divine assistance and gifts. Our voluntary misuse of

those gifts is the cause that we are not always good, and by use of them it is that we are not always committing crimes, and one age is not so depraved as another. The puritan who expects his fellow-creatures to be models of virtue, will condemn them as monsters of vice. The least exacting is most forgiving. The individual Christ-Life, manifested in Palestine, is the germ of God-life in all, and the seed of perfection in each. We give the whole vigour of our intellectual faculties to investigate the truths of Christianity; we inquire, we reason, we argue, and work out our own faith with the same energy of humility with which we work out our own salvation, and for the same reason too: it is God who helps, and renders every man equal to the task. We should sicken, parch, burn, for divorce from the vile herd, from the tyrannical and cruel, whom we think mercy should seek to bring nearer to the tomb; did we not look at the wisdom and might of the All-Gracious Saviour. In faith we wait for the perfect work that we are sure to behold at last. Thus, individual intelligence and passions are the levers which move society; and as they separate, or predominate, or combine, they form, specialize, or antagonize, the spirit of the age. Specialities of advance, startling retrogressions, mental and emotional crises, eras of prodigy amongst men, have analogies in the varying flow of cosmic energies, in the sports of plants, and in those divergencies which lead to variety of species. Not one is purely mechanical, or perfectly uniform; all manifest spontaneity and variety—a process of enigmas propounded by Wisdom. A process, not impelled by merciless, dark, impenetrable, incomprehensible fate; but an in-

telligible play of parts toward reasonable determined end.

This leads to the grand cosmic fact—In nature nothing exists in vain, or purposeless. We can no more destroy an atom, than we can annihilate a world. There is a basis, a reason, a purpose, for all. Sin—the result of voluntary departure from right doing, is not less awful, as a painful deprivation, than moral purity is glorious as a realization. Amid wildest storms, reason has a foreboding, and hears whispers, that sooner or later wisdom and goodness will prevail. Even the systematically bad, who on perverse principle act despitefully against all goodness, believe in the glory and excellence of virtue. By the candle held in the skeleton hand of poverty, men read the mysteries of their heart; while unnoticed and obscure in their retreat of study, are men whom kings may be proud to call their subjects; and these, specially, great in the sanctity of spiritual attainment, and in forestalments of science, delight in that intellectual, emotional, sensitive faculty which accepts marvels, stands in awe of sacred visions, discerns remarkable coincidences, verifies predictions, believes in supernatural guidings, and looks for revelations of the unknown.

A sceptic may exclaim that providence and the spirit of the age are not to be regarded as miracles, and may explain all that seems supernatural to ignorant, superstitious or excitable people; but the man of solemn, serious, impartial investigation, knows that if the world exists and is governed by God, every event, even the most natural, is essentially supernatural. Probably every man living can testify—"The spirit is more pene-

trative than logical, and gathers more than it can garner. I have been conscious of an unseen evil presence, and not unseldom felt the nearness of some mighty good." There are two extremes, credulity and scepticism. He who is credulous may rest generally on the power of God; but "God," as the Port Royal logicians say, "does not do all that He is able to do." He who is sceptical may say, truth and error are alike; some miracles are doubtless delusions; why not all? But, as the same logicians say, "We cannot guide ourselves by commonplaces in regard to all occurrences." S. Chrysostom speaks as if there were no miracles in his day. S. Augustine, in the twenty-second book of the "City of God," and in the ninth book of his "Confessions," speaks of sundry miracles, which he believed to be real; of one especially, at Milan, in the following words:—"Miraculum, quod Mediolani factum est cum illic essemus, quando illuminatus est cœcas, ad multorum notitiam potiut pervenire: quia et grandis est civitas, et ibi tunc erat Imperator, et immenso populo teste res gesta est, concurrente ad corpora martyrum Gervasii et Protasii." The same S. Augustine mentions other miracles. Pascal accepted a miracle wrought in his own day, and wrote a defence thereof. Bengel, the sound-minded, sagacious, learned commentator, relates that a girl, paralyzed for twenty years, was suddenly healed by the power of faith. Of course, these may be partially explained as the result of mental and emotional excitement; but there is something left that no natural explanation makes fully clear; a something that proclaims a secret work. Our Lord, at a most solemn time, called upon His disciples to believe Him "for the very works' sake." Now, by the works,

He could hardly mean anything else but what we call His miracles, for He uses the word "works," which is the special name given to His miracles in the Gospel of S. John; and, indeed, the word is so interpreted even by modern commentators, as Kuinoel, for instance, who are far removed from credulity. Then our Lord added, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto My Father." Now, whatever may be the exact meaning of this divine promise; yet no one, surely, who believes that our Lord is the Prophet of the world, can be considered as superstitious if he is not unready to hope that, at any period in the history of the Church, God may work special miracles by the hands of believers. The promise of the text is most general, confined to no time or country: "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." When and where, and on what occasion, before whom and for what particular object, our Lord has not in the text told us; the day may show it, when God's hand shall be revealed as in fire and with bright light. We are, indeed, being continually told by writers, who deal much in vague assertions, and write as if they alone were thinkers, and had a right to lecture all mankind, "that the ages of faith are past, and cannot be recalled, that to believe in miracles is simply silly and childish, that faith in hell is fast going," though, perhaps, such mythologies may be useful for art and imagination, for the painter and the poet. Reading such statements, we become—shame upon us—ashamed of the gospel of Christ. There is, we think, an atmosphere of scepticism

all around us ; we mistake the breath of a certain number of men for the air of the whole world, and the spirit of a few for the spirit of the age. We begin to doubt and doubt still more, till we are tempted at times to think of "heaven as gas, God a force, the second world a grave:" but such scepticism cannot undo the past, nor blot out the Gospel history of Christ, nor the lives of Augustine, Francis of Sales, Archbishop Leighton, All Saints; neither is the present helpless against it, for it cannot destroy the fact that if we compare the Christian Church of the last century with its present state, there has been a great awakening; missions wonderfully extended, Church worship marvellously enlivened, industry of the clergy everywhere increased, our very faults and follies signs of zeal, the number of communicants multiplied, the very look of the land changed by spires and towers innumerable. Do these things look as if faith were dead or dying? Are not such tokens, if not miraculous like the raising of Lazarus, yet akin to the miraculous, at least more than natural? Let us rouse ourselves by such facts, and set them against the assertions of sceptical men, and encourage ourselves by the indications of a present God, looking back also to the days of old, the generations that are past. Surely the gift of Prophecy, the Incarnation of Christ, many of His miracles, His Resurrection, the descent of the Holy Ghost, can only be explained as supernatural. Further, it is not wholly natural for men of inherent heavenliness and grace to proclaim the handiwork of God in scenes where human nature has been most debased by social corruption. Moreover, where the light of virtue is most darkened, and the

degradation of our nature is most conspicuous, are unerring indications of truths not yet discovered, of mutual achievements yet to be wrought, of a process soon to be perfected, of a miracle-power in man coming to him from without. Insight of this led Newton and Copernicus to their scientific triumphs. They imagined not less than they thought, and ascending the heights of each, by experience and study, became singularly practical and useful.

The maintenance of ordinary uniformity in nature, without which we could not duly order our life, and our science would be of little use through uncertainty, will not allow unusual and special miracles to become common, or by frequency cease to be miracles. "Novit Deus quomodo ipsa miracula sua debeat commendare, novit agere ne vilescant" (S. Augustine, "Serm." 286). To set a new seal with new miraculous inscription for every one who requireth it, were to make rarities cheap, turn miracle into nature, and empty it of wonder. This can be proved: Is it less a miracle for the sun to move than to stand? Certainly not, to stand seems somewhat more natural. Is it a greater miracle for one man to rise from the grave, than for all manner of living things, day by day, to live and thrive by means of the dead? Certainly not. The usual, rightly regarded, is not less marvellous than the unusual; indeed, is it not more wonderful being usual? Every event standing alone is miraculous, surely the multitude magnifies the marvel? In a miracle God shows Himself for a moment, that we may know He is with us every moment. If, however, we want new things for ourselves, and every man, a Herod, say to Christ, "Do a wonder before me also:" not a word will be said

—no marvel wrought. If we cry with the priests of old, "Come down from the cross, and we will believe Thee:" Jesus remains unmoved. His stedfast silence to blasphemers now, as then, gives the sublimest picture that artist ever painted. If every time we had an ache, or mourned the loss of relative, prayer wrought all we wished, the will of man would usurp the Throne of God: and human caprice, not law, prevail. What place or motive could be found for faith, self-denial, continuous labour, obedience, discipline? There could be no advance in art or science, we should be as children, and grow up as savages, and the blasphemous thought might come—Animal magnetism, or hypnotism, subordinates the sense and intelligence of the medium to the operator's will; so will enunciated in prayer predominates in nature, ay, controls the Almighty.

We need not hunt for marvels, astounding reversals of natural law, visions, and spectres—

> "Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas,
> Nocturnos lemures, portentaque Thessala, rides."
>
> HORACE, 2 *Ep.* ii. 208.

We may find the supernatural in the natural any and every day. It is the commonest and grossest blunders of scientific diminutives, to imagine that all in nature is of nature. There are more excellent natures. We ascend the height of argument by means of supernatures. These supernatures are, so to speak, natural manifestations or degrees of the supernatural. When one part of nature guides, suspends, changes, overcomes, elevates another portion; it is a supernature—sets causes in operation and produces combinations which are impossible to the unaided lower nature. Nature never makes a gun, nor

pulls the trigger, nor builds a house, nor writes a book, nor frames a ship. Man comes down from his higher nature, and by sovereign act makes these things—different from all other things, and in that measure preternatural. Men are little supernaturals. There are other supernaturals less than ourselves: all the higher are gradational supernaturals to the lower. In every common event is something not less peremptory and mysterious than that which reveals the miraculous in unusual form. The transcendental mingles everywhere with the usual—

> "Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus,
> Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet."
>
> VIRGIL, *Æneid*, vi. 727.

There is certainly a gradation of supernatures within nature, and these are supernaturals in their respective degrees: "Their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel" (Ezek. i. 16). Not only is every higher thing gradationally supernatural in comparison with that which it excels, creatures even of the same kind are not of equal order. Homer, Shakespeare, Newton, Watt, Stephenson, do the work of gods, if compared with the stunted Eskimo or the wild Australian.

Review our argument:—General incredulity is no disproof of miracles in modern times. Since Apostolic days, and the Divine Establishment of the Church by miracle, as there is no waste in the Divine Economy, miracles, specially unveiling Divine Power, have been few. The great marvels, Christ and the Church, are the two abiding marvels. We find an all-pervading presence capable of working miracles; and this supernatural, in

ordinary action, is natural. Miracles, in a real sense of the word "miracles," have not ceased: for there is a peculiarity in every life so purposive as, in its order, to be separated from chance; and by its intelligibility divided from fate—unless fate be that which reasons and purposes: but fate and chance are mere words, and do nothing. In reasoning as to "The Spirit of the Age," "In Nature nothing Exists in Vain," "Special Marvels," "Natural Uniformity," "Smaller Supernaturals," we saw unveilings of power for definite purposes. There could not be definite purposes anywhere unless Reason existed at the heart of things. This Reason manifests itself in definite intelligible purposes, as if to show that physical sway is subject to moral rule—a rule conducting all things to some far-off Divine Event.

We now read other supernatural signatures.

A sacrament is more than an ordinance: a sacrament is of divine institution, an ordinance is by man. A sacrament—rightly administered and duly received—is a channel of special grace: grace not naturally in the elements, but supernaturally conveyed. Here we have a continual miracle: no use of water, nor eating of bread, nor drinking of wine, other than sacramentally, conveys the same grace. "Happy is that man that sits at the table of angels, that puts his hand into the dish with the King of all creatures, and feeds upon the Eternal Son of God, joining things below with things above, heaven with earth, life with death; that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (Jerem. Taylor, "Life of Christ," Part III. sec. v.). "Sacramento divina virtus assistit . . . si enim ad ipsas res visibiles quibus sacramenta tractantur, animum conferamus; quis nesciat eos corrupti-

biles; sin autem ad id quod per illos igitur, quis non videat non posse corrumpi?" (S. Augustine, "Contra Donatist," lib. iii.).

What think we of Apostolic Succession? Every man well instructed and rightly persuaded knows that in Apostolic Succession there is a special grace which sanctifies and separates some men from other men for sacred uses. Apostolical Succession is a fact in history, a succession as certain as that of any earthly dynasty; something independent of kings and revolutions and Acts of Parliament; traced undoubtedly back to the days of Apostles, and of Christ our Lord; believed in by practical laymen, and surely almost, if not quite, a miracle. Indestructible even by the crimes and follies of many ordained according to it. An ordained man is something different from one unordained, however brilliant and intellectual and virtuous the latter may be. Even persons who deny Apostolic Succession to outward, continuous, visible, clerical orders—it is but a modern denial—allow that special grace is given to all who, under the Divine Spirit's influence, are separated to the Ministry of God's Holy Word.

True members of Christ's Church stand within something, and possess that which outsiders have not. They enjoy benedictions and beneficences—not of natural disposition or earthly gift—the charities of Heaven. Every Regeneration, every Conversion, is a miracle or—nothing at all. When we minister at the bed-side of dying men, and light from on high makes the face of the departing as the face of an angel, and the heart of him who was without hope to thrill with the felt presence of the power of eternal life, all is natural—yes, supernatural; all is

human—yes, Divinely Human: "ὁ Θεὸς πανταχοῦ κεχυμένος" (Josephus).

If we pray, is it not in the hope that God hears and answers prayer?

"εὐχῆς δικαίας οὐκ ἀνήκοος Θεός."

MENANDER.

The universal cry of nature is prayer. Who continues to pray, unless he believes that God hears His children's cry, and that there is in it the grace to obtain help? "Ruffinus spake a great thing but it was hugely true—'Quis dubitet mundum stare precibus sanctorum?'" (Jerem. Taylor, "Serm." vi.)—saintly prayer sustains the world.

"Think ye the spires that glow so bright
In front of yonder setting sun,
Stand by their own unshaken might?
No;—where the upholding grace is won,
We dare not ask, nor Heaven would tell,
But sure from many a hidden dell,
From many a rural nook unthought of, there
Rises for that proud world the saint's prevailing prayer."

KEBLE, *Christian Year:* "All Saints' Day."

He who says—"Not my will but Thine be done"—limits not the prayer to natural use; but requests that in divine use of nature, which is best use of nature, he may be blessed by conformity of the human to the Divine, and that the weakness of man may prevail upon the mightiness of God; "Vult enim Deus rogari, vult cogi, vult quadam importunitate vinci" (S. Gregory, in Ps. vi.). There can be no real prayer apart from the persuasion, that our Father in heaven gives more wonderfully than we can think, and more richly than we ask. Every giving, every withholding, in

answer to prayer, is a miracle. Mozley, on Miracles, p. 101, says, "A miracle has a foot, so to speak, in each world; one part of it resting upon the earth, while the other goes down beyond our intellectual reach into the depths of the invisible world." The philosopher who thinks little of a child's prayer has no true philosophy; but even he must admit that the unslumbering diligence of our science brings us into communion with the Intelligence manifested in the world's construction and rule. Besides this, there is in our soul an intent passion by which, at times, we consciously are in union with a wisdom that is above the earth; and we enjoy not merely the sweet power given by communion with saints, but that power by which we confer with the Intelligence that rules earth and earth's doings. Those who cultivate this power with long labour and deep thought, know something of an influence that seems miraculous, the spirit within the flesh goes beyond the flesh. Intent and rapt longing to know the Blessed elevates them into His presence, and the joy is unspeakable, full of glory; every thought is charioted and winged with divinity, partakes of heaven (Eph. iii. 14–19).

These works of grace may be called ordinary, not exactly miraculous; the glories are mostly hidden, miracles would make them visible. We reply—Ordinary grace, so called, is not less miraculous than the extraordinary—both are of God. The daily acts of Christ were not less divine than those which awake our wonder: they were part of the Life of God on earth. Love, power, wisdom, were not less essentially in them than in the making of water to be wine, and the instantaneous forming of bread. Divinity was in all or none. Jesus

placed Gospel Preaching on a level with the miracles that restored sight to the blind and life to the dead (Matt. xi. 5). Those wonders which fascinate men's attention are not the only miracles. As miracles mingle with all natural acts, miracles give power and beauty to all religious acts. Lightning manifests the electric force which is everywhere present, and were not God in the vintage water would never be wine. God's presence in a miracle is, to His presence in nature, as a flash of lightning is to the sun. There is not less Divine Power in Holy Scripture than in the Voice that raises the dead: if we believe not Moses and the prophets, neither shall we be persuaded though one rose from the dead (Luke xvi. 31).

Ancient prodigies do not live only in existing records; the Jews are a standing miracle and proof of miracle—"Judæi, secundum prophetias quas legunt, per omnes sunt terras ubique dispersi, ut earum quoque codicibus Christianæ non desit testimonium veritati" (S. Augustine, "Contra Duas Epist. Pelag.," lib. iii.). Nothing in the history, or character, or sentiment, or aspiration of any other nation, equals the impulse of prophecy and the current of faith in the Jewish community. Heathen nations had national, petty, local vaticinations. The Jewish people looked into the whole future with boldness and grandeur of scope. Take Abraham, their father, as representative: he, when as yet there was no Israel—no family—no seed—"grasped the world as his inheritance, and saw all the earth engrafted upon his own stock by conversion to his own faith" (Mozley, "Ruling Ideas," p. 23). The creed of Abraham has conquered the idolatry of the human race. The seed

in one man's soul is harvested in a universal religion. The faith of Abraham is the faith of the civilized world. God said, "Father of many nations have I made thee . . . and kings shall come out of thee" (Gen. xvii. 5, 6). Abraham believed it, saw in himself the nucleus of a world-wide power, of a universal faith. He read in the roll of Providence a name predestined to be everlasting and universal. He saw in the Day of Christ (John viii. 56) a Power which should fill the earth, and cast all contemporary rule into the shade. Before that sojourner, that pilgrim, moving his tent from place to place in a strange land, arose a boundless prospect. He knew that his work would live. He beheld another Life, another Work, through whom and by which he and the world would attain immortality. The past accomplishment of this was a miracle, the present maintenance of it is a miracle, the application of the Life and of the Work to every life and work now is a miracle —a miracle wrought for every believer. This truth exalts and makes the universe lovely. Every fountain and stream and hill under the stars becomes to the Christian man places where Godhead and Spirit may be known.

We say rightly as men of science, theologians, Christians, "God has not left Himself without witness." The Bible, Christ, the Church, can only be accounted for by continual miracle. "Ἀζιοπιστοτέρα ἡ τῶν προφητῶν διδασκαλία τῆς τῶν ἀνισταμέναων ἀπαγγελίας" (S. Chrysost., "De Lazaro Concio.," iv.). To assert that a Jewish Carpenter changed the religion of the world—without a miracle, though all was said to be done by miracle, is to propound a miracle indeed. That the truest,

purest, mightiest of our race, who has promised to be always with us, to make our prayer effective, defend us from all danger, and enable us to do greater works than He did (Matt. xxviii. 20; John xiv. 12–14), should not fulfil His words; that He who has become the wonder and worship of the best minds and hearts, should either Himself, or by those whom He chose, lead the world to worship Him and to regard His works as divine, though no Divinity was present, either then or now; is incredible. To say—"that He, the Truth, and those whom He chose to be faithful, should establish a system of truth on the most persistent and grossest fraud," is to lie as the devil lies, is to sin against the Holy Ghost. It is only when we are ill tempered and cross, out of humour with ourselves and others, that we doubt as to the miraculous power of faith. To the proud and scornful, Christ seems as nothing. To the self-righteous, He is as an impostor. That is no wonder: for only when our intellect is strongest and most lively, the whole man highest-wrought and most reasonable, we obtain the truest knowledge of Christ. Every other man, as the old Babel-builders, left the tower from earth to heaven unadvanced and incomplete. Now, by knowing Jesus, we attain to virtue, and by virtue honour, not so much by Christianity, as by Christ; or, rather, Christianity is Christ. He is the living Person even now, in Spirit, with us; doing wonders and enabling us to do wonders. The palace of His wisdom we have only begun to enter, and are yet in the vestibule; nor can we guess what treasures are hid in those chambers of which past experience affords faint analogy and slender clue. This, however, we know: for Christianity, the religion of

miracles, to be without miracle, is not to be credited. The percipient and recipient man passes from glory to glory (2 Cor. iii. 18); partakes of new life, new nature (John i. 12, 13); by a mysterious, holy, transforming, elevating change, that surpasses all understanding (1 John iii. 1, 2). The marvellous work is wrought by the Words of Jesus through action of that promised Holy Ghost whose sanctifying influence all the powers of sin oppose: it is miraculous in every part.

This continual and gracious interference, day by day, naturalization of the supernatural in our nature, by means of prophecy, ritual, ministry, and divine grace, is obviously a part of that definite arrangement, that teleological adaptation, subordination, and correlation of religion, which can only be explained by the existence of some Intelligent Entity foreseeing, and co-ordinating the whole, that Supernatural whom theologians rightly name Deity, whose mightiest and widest revelation displays Him as the Creator. That He should bestow grace in the use of appointed means is not more wonderful than the effectuation of physical order by means of gravity. That by Holy Sacraments, Divine Word, Spiritual Influence, Prayer, a real work in spiritual life should be effected; and that an actual personal experience of help received, and of sanctity communicated, elevates the spirit; accords with the quickening and maintenance of natural life by the action of vital principle or principles. Want of faith and spirituality in an age, no doubt, hinders miraculous work. In any case, our faith that there is an Eternal Power who does work miracles is proved by every phenomenon being in its essence wonderful; and by a marvellous correlation of all parts in the universe

which science shows, more and more, to be teleological. Even if no miraculous work had been done within our present age, that would be no argument: for we may see miracles any day that our faith makes us conversant with spiritual powers. If in the last days there are to be seducing spirits, we may be sure that their evil works will be counteracted by mightier. There is no antecedent improbability against a great manifestation of miraculous power in our day. As for asserted miracles, we should not credit any evidence that is less than intellectually irresistible; yet to say—"a miracle is impossible," would be absurd. Even wicked men admit a sort of providence—call it luck, or whatever they may—by which they are under discipline; and feel that, though free, they are not independent. The unseen hand, the unheard voice, helping—commanding—forbidding—may be resisted; but it is certain that the Power who upholds all worlds can, when He sees fit, reveal Himself by special wonders—"Fides aroma scientiarum." Only by such, or somewhat similar, process of thought concerning religious faith in marvels, are we able to obtain an approximate view of the universe as a harmonious whole; or to link the obvious physical order with the discernible religious order. We discover a law, as to conservation of energy, by which power, ever transforming itself, is never lost. According to this law, by some polarization of forces, are crystals; by higher process, we obtain organic life; by an unconscious operation—for which we have no name—and by conscious operation, called "cerebration," we derive intelligence. All these forces are known gradational manifestations of energy. We ascend from physical force to vital, from vital to mental, from

mental to emotional, and seem, in our most graced and gifted men, partly to possess those heights of spirituality which approach the Supreme. The whole circle of being goes out from God and returns to God. There are wheels within wheels, worlds within worlds, infinities and infinitudes of manifold order. Every outer operation is the shell of an inner process. Automatism, physical and vital, is the earthly birthplace for nature's offspring—of life and intelligence. By the marriage of Life and Intelligence children are procreated for ascending grades of freedom. The willing and capable rise to the understanding, love, and service of the Almighty.

Where all is change, and that without ceasing; where all is interference, and that without limit; departures from the ordinary mode of change, such as those of which Religion enforces belief, belong to that indefinite number of varieties which fill the universe, and super-naturalize the natural. They are varieties, wrought by known or unknown powers, which man has never mastered, and probably never will. "The course of nature, in truth, is not only uniform, it is infinitely various" (Mill's "Logic," Bk. III. ch. iii.). "Nobody can find two leaves of any tree, or any two natural productions of ordinarily visible size, which are not visibly different, far more so than any artist could make any great number of them out of his own head" (Sir E. Beckett, "Origin of Laws of Nature," p. 77). Were all the miracles, recorded in Holy Scripture, wrought now in one day before our eyes, they would not equal in number or magnitude those other marvels of change, accomplished in the self-same day, for

which science neither has—nor can have cognition as to the cause; neither presents—nor ever will present an accurate explanatory formula of the process. Our soundest lawyers, greatest physicians, most skilful scientists, acutest reasoners, believe that there have been, are, and will be miracles. The thoughtful know what presses darkly and most bitterly on the human mind. Those highest in graces and gifts, who worship the Glorious One, would give their earthly all for the privilege of justifying the ways of God to men. They do not dream, nor invent, their spirit goes out to the future and returns with prophecy:—we shall awake at last, and heart gladly answer where genius now complains.

THOUGHT XXVIII.

DESIGN OF MIRACLES.

"The miracles of the Bible are not only emblems of power in the spiritual world, but also exponents of the miracles of nature, experiments, as it were, made by the Great Teacher in person, on a small scale and within a limited time, to illustrate to mankind the phenomena that are taking place through longer periods throughout the universe. . . . The philosophy of miracles is, therefore, the revelation of the living God as the God of nature."—*Macmillan.*

"Man is a little world, for all the mysteries of nature are treasured up in him."

RESPICE—We are sure, looking back upon our argument, that miracles, physical and moral, are verified. Nature is God Almighty's Garment,

"Der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid;"
Faust, Act i. sc. 1.

which He fashioned by Creation, which He uses in Providence. Those who tell us that to work a miracle the Lord must derange and change the universe to utmost limits, may well be told—The will of man changes and conquers the course of nature, rendering every law submissive; if man does this without derangement of the universe, shall the Almighty be incompetent? We know, moreover, that Nature was not always complete, as to

the past; nor is it now eternally complete for the future; change is so universal amidst the seeming uniformity, that never for two moments are worlds precisely the same. Nature winneth evermore victories from chaos for life and beauty; we see but the smallest part of the Lord's Dominions and Works.

Aspice—We look around, faith in God—in the Supernatural, is that bright star which guides into a safe haven. Miracles are sparks glistening on the wheel of Divine Providence as it revolves in ordinary work. They are probable, reasonable, natural, coming from Him by whom nature exists; and Supernatural as controlling nature. Nature is afflicted with a fatal malady.

"νοσεῖ πρόπας στόλος."
SOPHOCLES, *Œdipus Rex*, 168.

"ἐν ἀνθρώποισι δὲ
κακοῖς νοσοῦντα σύγχυσιν πολλὴν ἔχει."
EURIPIDES, *Frag. Pol.*

Miracles are a part of the means, elixirs in the prescription of the Great Physician. It is in the course of Nature that medicines heal, change the otherwise regular current of things, bring in a new and endless range of consequent events, that, instead of death, life rules and man is saved:

"Ἰατρικὴ δὲ καὶ μαντικὴ καὶ πάνυ συγγενεῖς εἰσὶ."
HIPPOCRATES, *Epist. ad Philop.*

Things are not fated, not bound with a chain of inseparable links; there are insertions of variety, links not welded—magnetic links under control of a Great Electrician, for translation of Divine Will into natural effect, human and superhuman effort. History, art, science, all experience, show that the universe is miracu-

lous. We cannot fully know the cause or causes of any event—whether great or small; in origin, in continuance, in passing away, in the whole and in every fragment, the earth, our life on it, and our connection with other worlds, are mysteries. We cannot tell what a moment may bring forth, but we know, in a manner not to be mistaken, that the Most High reigneth.

Prospice—Looking forward, we see that the anthropomorphism of our argument is not feebleness, but real strength. The counterpart is in the intelligible framework of the universe. We must judge of God in accordance with the faculties which we possess and the discerned government of nature. It is by necessity of our nature that we judge human-wise of God, by like necessity we judge human-wise in all our science. Moreover, we discern a likeness to the constitution of our character in the texture of that Holy Mind, the Divine Incarnation, Jesus. All belonging to this Jesus—the Prophecies, Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, Sending of the Holy Ghost—impart knowledge of the Divine Nature and give Power. Pascal says, "Non seulement nous ne connaissons Dieu que par J. C., mais nous ne connaissons nous mêmes que par J. C." Though trial and sorrow may come, we shall never part company with that Divinely given blessed heart-moving hope—"tremolar dell' onde"—that beautiful measured rhythm of the grand ocean's waves of Immortality,

"ποντίων δὲ κυμάτων
ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα·"

ÆSCHYLUS, *Prom.* 89.

connecting all the pure in heart with a Heavenly Home.

Miracles, as we look back, were the steps by which

nature ascended the heights of being and existence. As we look around, miracles are the power in all new life, and the sustainment of old life; they move in the rhythm of all things, the current of electricity, the pulsation of life, the throb of our breast; they are mighty in the tidal-wave, in succession of day and night, in cycles of the universe. Miracles, as we look forward, are to accomplish catastrophes in the destinies of men and of worlds. In the past, the present, the future, our conscience—our reason—our science—detect, accept, approve, miraculous working.

The Design of Miracles, as to men, is to affix them and nature with the seal of God, in proof that things are not of themselves but by purpose of the Almighty. They show that all nature is essentially supernatural; they account for beginning, continuance, end. They explain those things for which science cannot account. They rule and make agree those discrepancies in religion and science which range so many of us in the ranks of conflicting creeds. They enable us to arrange all discordant elements in logical harmony without sacrifice of essential and necessary truth. When they appear as startling events, their occurrence is so rare that they afford no ground for belief in any new law of nature, nor for disbelieving any that we suppose to be established. They rebuke the exaggerations of some rash thinkers in science as to the contradictions between the current of religion and the course of nature. They indicate a time when our moral and intellectual ideas, enlarged by Divine attainment, will more fully know natural facts. Miracles make hidden glory visible, the extraordinary proves that the ordinary

is Divine, the uncommon and wonderful give to all things a supreme aspect; without them, constituted as we are, could be no certainty even as to God's existence. Creation would not be known as a standing wonder, unless illuminated at times with the strong light of miracles. The philosophy of miracles is the revelation of the Living God, and a seal of the supernatural to revealed advance in moral truth.

Records of marvels are in every land and language. Believers are not credulous and rash, but the most intellectual and prudent of men. Human consciousness, growing up from the very root of things, is possessed with conviction of the Divinity by whom it grew; discerns the fact that all effects are from the Great Cause; and faith in the One Resurrection Life is no great difficulty to him who knows that all life rose out of the dead. The grain of wheat abideth alone, unconscious of all its surrounding, but if it die, if the warm prolific moisture of the settled furrow decompose all but that little salient point, the embryo, it will start up and bear much fruit. The frost-bound bulb of the snowdrop is not dead but sleepeth. If the south wind blow there will be a putting on of lovely garments. The lily, too, sheds its slough, and becomes an exquisite image of moral purity. To believe in this or that departure from Nature's usual course, is not unreasonable, but a lawful enlargement. Every law contains all conceivable and inconceivable eccentricities: no Deity presides where law is absent.

Forged miracles are not disproof, but proof of the universal conviction as to reality of the true. The statement that narratives of miracles chiefly abound among

ignorant, barbarous, credulous nations, is not accurate: the most compact, continued, intelligible, credible, historical account, is given by the most remarkable people in the world; and those of them who wrought the miracles, or who wrote the records of them, were of a virtue outshining circumstance and defying temptation. Only one religion is established by miracles, yet all religion is based on conviction of the Supernatural, and a miracle-stream flows through all history, which scientific measurement proves to be deep and wide. If it be said, "Past experience can only be verified by cross-examination of the witnesses, which is impossible; and belief in the Scripture miracles rests on our consciousness of fitness, rather than on demonstrations of their truth; 'Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus inciderit;'" we reply —The moral consciousness of fitness is in itself a conviction that the experience of former men was veritable. Nor is that all: the miracles of Scripture, exceeding all other wonders, are in connection with truths so important, morality so pure, men so grand, that the accusation of ignorance, barbarism, superstition, must be refused. They rest on past experience which can be verified, at least in part; the experience was that of millions; and on present facts, which we may investigate. Thus resting, they are world-wide phenomena—for which you cannot account. Or, if you do partially account, it is by allowing spiritual miracles, and refusing physical, which is absurd. Spiritual conversions day by day, marvellous enlightenment, renewal of strength, abounding of joy, are not less miraculous than the old marvels.

Of all nations in the world, the Jews had the highest

knowledge of God, purest morality, the best and wisest laws. The miracles wrought among them were not for show; nor to obtain for the workers personal influence, power, wealth; but for separation of the race from impure and godless nations, and to establish faith in One God. They were the least superstitious of all people; and received no marvels but those specially attested, connected with moral precept, civil and ecclesiastical law, the life and worship of the nation. If it be said, "Their continual idolatry before the Captivity, and their readiness at the Christian era to believe every impostor, prove their credulity;" we reply—The common sense of the nation always righted itself; the perturbations, trials, experiences of other religions, of other asserted marvels, caused them to return with additional reverence and tenacity to their common faith: a faith which lived on uncorrupted in its records, and preserving amongst the people, in all times and seasons, those sacred human affections in which the breath of God breathes and is. Only marvels recorded by public monuments and religious memorials are now received by them; and these form the nation's character, habits, literature, religion, aspiration, science. (See Leslie's "Short Method with Deists.")

These marvels, antecedently incredible and, to all appearance, utterly impossible; so soon as wrought and attested, are partly explained by natural similitudes—some of which we have given. In addition, the fact of being wrought: I. in opposition to Evil and Error; II. in confirmation of Righteousness and Truth; yields the peculiar and satisfying conviction that they are parts of a great plan.

I. Evil and error are painful facts, and universal. There is not merely the dulness of error, but an appreciable cleverness in evil; indeed, a skill of the very highest, subtlest kind in the various combinations of physical and psychical, mental and moral evil. There is hope of reform when a dull untaught stolid man, or an excitable weakling, is led by accident or temptation into guilt; but if men of ability and education, capable of honourable distinction, enter dark tangled defiles to attain, by ingenuity and through besetting perils, the success of fraud or the fleeting enjoyment of vice, of such men is little hope: good angels abandon them for ever. The determined meditative energy which some employ in the conception and execution of crime—crime which fascinates in proportion to the intellect of the criminal—seems everywhere to testify of Satanic craftiness and inhuman malice against God and holiness; to reveal an intricately devised and elaborately executed maze of iniquity, entangling the course of history, perverting all life, making the whole earth to groan. Evil, moreover, connected with strange mythologies, idolatry, spirit-culture, devil-worship, appears to be allied with an Evil Principle asserting himself in marvels—diabolically wrought, inciting men to selfishness and sensuality, obscenity and superstition. Not merely men of benighted mind, only "illumined by a kind of miserable astuteness, and that cunning of the belly which is born of want to engender avarice;" but men of vast power who, like Cæsar Borgia—the murderer, the poisoner, the fratricide—are munificent patrons with exquisite appreciation of art, of marvellous persuasive, even poetic power. No wonder that evil creates the greatest difficulty as to faith

in the existence and personality of God: it seems to defy and deny the omnipotence, omniscience, and beneficence of the Supreme.

To reveal truth, to be a warning against error, and a means of resisting and overcoming evil, Divine miracles were wrought. To believe that the facts and doctrines of our Faith were received, and made their way, without miracles, is to believe something more miraculous than all that our books record. The people, amongst whom miracles were performed, attained the highest development of morality in the world. In the men lay those germs of spirit and activity which enable men to obtain renown in bold career. In the women was that yet finer stuff and more spiritual essence which lifts holy minds to the sacred atmosphere and life of Heaven. As for the prophets, through whose Inspiration came Revelation and Might, they lived for the honour and service of the One Holy Lord. It is not credible that these men, these women, these prophets, lied and deceived in the name of that Holy One; that tricks of jugglery should be passed off as miracles by votaries of the purest morality, who taught the grandest and most spiritual doctrines of which the world has ever obtained knowledge.

No sane man regards such a horrible thing as possible. The worst and most immoral of unbelievers allow that the Apostles, and those after them, were not deceivers; they rather charge them with being deceived. The plea of mistake will not avail. The mistake would some time or other leak out, but these men are always true; and men are only true, even to their genius, when the genius is at home in their career. The writers of the Old Testament, of the Gospels, of the Acts, of

the Epistles, of the Revelation, declare, as a fact, that they themselves had performed miracles, had seen, known, tested, the reality of miraculous works, and were ready to die in witness of their truth. "Wonderful as the whole Gospel History is, the most wonderful thing of all is, that a Jewish peasant should have succeeded in changing the religion of the world. That He should have succeeded in doing this without displaying any miracles would have been more wonderful than all the miracles that are recorded; and that He should have accomplished all this by means of pretended miracles, when none were really performed, would be most incredible of all" (Archbishop Whately).

It is a confirmation of the previous arguments, that Satanic—possibly pretended—miracles, preceded, accompanied, and followed Scripture marvels; that ignorance and superstition hollowed a channel for a stream of diabolical delusions to run through the whole course of human history and life. Indeed, the existence, or asserted existence, of these evil marvels accounts for the surprisingly little influence exercised by real miracles: the Jews, in many instances, not being persuaded however great the wonders that were wrought. As for marvels, generally refused, some of the best thinkers and holiest of men honestly believe that "ecclesiastical miracles" were not all delusions; and men of highest intelligence recognize a possible reality, and an actual wickedness, in Witchcraft. It is plain from Scripture, either that superhuman prodigies were wrought—or so craftily simulated as to seem real (Deut. xiii. 1–5). That they were real may be inferred from the fact that our Lord's whole life was a contention against them, and

His death and resurrection are for deliverance from them. That lying signs and wonders (not unreal but perverting to destruction) will be wrought in the last days no Christian doubts (Matt. xxiv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 9; Rev. xiii. 13, 14). On this account, miracles appeal, rather, to common sense than to extravagant expectations; are meant to call our attention to holiness, to truth, rather than to remove the abnormal scepticism of morbid intellectuality. Only in contending against malice and unbelief—more than human, and against a more than world-power, craftily sustained by stupendous signs—are miracles wrought. Christ positively refused to work any miracle for the conviction of unbelievers. An opponent has no warrant for saying, "Revelation rests upon miracles, and miracles rest only upon Revelation, therefore, I reject both:" for the argument, as to Christianity, is not so much that we ought to receive it because of the marvels, but that the sublime mind, perfect purity, far-sighted sagacity of the Saviour, could not possibly have allied Him or His Gospel to a lie. It is equally impossible that men who loved Him for His truth, who lived in maintenance of His holiness, and died on behalf of both; could have distorted His life and defiled His teaching, or could have lived in falsity and died traitors against His purity. There is no escape from the fact that miracles are possible at all times and in all places; but we rightly test all alleged miracles as severely as we can, and receive them only when the evidence in their favour appears to be reasonably irresistible.

II. Miracles obtain verification of a peculiarly convincing character, when viewed in connection with the wide plan, profound doctrines, and holy precepts of

Christ—which doctrines and precepts they clothe with superhuman authority.

The plan embraces all time, all men, all earthly things, and is mysteriously linked with intelligences and operations in other worlds. It proposes and undertakes the abolition of evil, the establishment of purity, and the raising of all things to a higher stage of being and existence. As it is a part of the plan to act by moral and loving persuasion on behalf of right, purity, truth, Revelation and Miracles are launched with only so much force as is necessary to win and maintain their acceptance by the pure-minded; in nowise to coerce the wilful unbeliever, or to compel the wicked and malicious. When conversion to holiness has been wrought by consideration and knowledge of God's Plan of Salvation; when love enters the heart, and constrains the affections to forsake sin; then miracles are the seal of God that the Truth is not of human invention, but Divine. The men thus won receive an exaltation and vividness of cerebral faculties amounting almost to a new sense. It is not "religiosity," "religentem esse oportet, religiosum nefas" ("Poeta apud A Gellium"), it is not a preternatural exaltation of imagination, not a goading of the mind to an unnatural state of susceptibility, but specifically spiritual. A power, a vividness, a purity, a farsightedness, such as possess men who say on the approach of their dissolution, "Many things are growing clear to us." Socrates declared, in his defence, "I am now arrived at the verge of life, wherein it is familiar with people to foretell what will come to pass." To the testimony of philosophers may be added that of poets—

"Hear my latest breath,
The gods inspire it."

POPE.

"Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
Who stand upon the threshold of the new."

WALLER.

The truths in connection with miracles, are not less wonderful. They declare that the Evil Principle, causing alienation from God, will be destroyed by the Good Principle, the Personal God, imparting His own Nature to the flesh of men; that thus man shall be made Divine, and the Earth become a Paradise. Evil will only continue

"Till one Greater Man
Restore us and regain the blissful seat."

Paradise Lost, i. 4.

This great truth of Incarnation includes all other sacred mysteries, explains and renders them possible. It has threefold illustration: 1. Nature, as seen in Creation, is a material phenomenon, or embodiment; 2. Literature, as represented in Holy Scripture, is an intellectual phenomenon, or embodiment; 3. Man, as he stood in Eden—a living soul, and man as he stands by new birth in Christ—a quickening spirit, are the living, the physical, the spiritual phenomena. Thus, there are three Revelations of the Almighty: a Material Universe, an Inspired Book, an Incarnate God-man. Every one of these Revelations displays two powers contending for supremacy—Good and Evil; and they are all bound up into a plan or scheme of twofold development; the individual perfection of every creature, and the perfection of the universe. We, men, must individually do our work.

What we want is not talent, but purpose; not the power to achieve, but the will to labour. We must tell the weary peasant of the rest that awaits his vision, and of enjoyment beyond the grave. Our privilege is to raise the masses by telling the workmen that pious genius is ever ardent, ever young; by assuring all honest labourers that glorious honours attend the development of their being, that they shall spring refreshed from the grave's abyss, shall follow from star to star; that progress is at once the supreme felicity and necessary law of the good man's existence. Wisdom that is infallible, and Love that never sleeps, will bring glorious inspiration from the Almighty, and enable them habitually to walk in the light of His countenance (Rev. xxi. 1–4). With the relish of an unspoiled nature, with the fulness of a wise spirit, with the emotion of a thankful heart, they will partake of those good things which surpass all present understanding.

The precepts, in connection with miracles, are an affirmation of verity: they carry human conduct into sublimity of life. The process is wrought by that revelation of God in Nature, in Holy Scripture, in Christ, which, becoming intelligently approved by the will and planted in the affections, elevates the will and affections into capacity to investigate, ascertain, appreciate, the true nature and blessed power of God's Presence. Men, with minds thus elevated, were chosen to be Inspired Writers; and, in general, to be witnesses of miracles; and they unquestionably, through their far-sightedness and purity, exercised and still exercise the greatest existing intellectual and moral power on the customs, literature, and science of the world. Those nations who

have not yielded faith to the miracles, nor their life to be guided by the doctrines of Scripture, are the weakest, poorest, of least avail for good, in the Earth. Their civilization, even, is of that kind which over-cultivates those arts that connect themselves with the senses, and have little counterpoise from the intellect. The senses acquiring uncurbed dominion, men become willing slaves of irregular and profligate habits. As to individuals, every man who refuses the Bible and its miracles seems, by the law as to survival of the fittest, incapable of high and glorious life.

We are not, however, to make miracles do more than was designed. Christianity rests not merely upon miracles. They form but one department of a very wide and complex system of evidence to which prophecy, moral character, and other contributories, yield their full share. Those who go about saying, "Whereas of old the Gospel was believed on account of its miracles, now its miracles are believed, if they are believed, on account of the Gospel which attests them"—are to be answered —The former statement is only partially true, but we rightly and wholly accept Scripture miracles because of the Gospel which does attest them.

The conclusion—Miracles, being attested by men who were Inspired to be Prophets and Workers for God, are worthy of all acceptation; the Scriptures, themselves, not being the least of the miracles. Evil and Error rendering miracles necessary, true miracles are separated from Satanic marvels, and affirmed to be Divine Workmanship, by their connection with a wonderful plan of Salvation, marvellous doctrines, holy precepts. The

Infinite God, moreover, who is beyond nature, is the Creator of nature; "natura nulla est, quæ non aut Deus ipse sit, aut ab ipso facta" (S. Augustine); and, however inconceivable and unexplainable in terms of physical science, He so reveals Himself to us, by means of Nature, that our inner man is in some way a shadow of His own Being; while the gentlest and beautifulest of our emotions inspire belief that we are children of His love, whom He leads to a Heavenly Land.

Science shows that the world is not only mechanical but vital, intellectual, spiritual; not a world that a mechanical system can explain; but certainly a world in which every man needs to pray, "Guide me aright, strengthen me to do good, deliver me from evil." The existence of such a world, our freedom in it and responsibility, our need of moral guidance, the gift of strength, our preservation from sin, are only possible by miracle; and only intelligible, as parts of a comprehensive teleological plan of Divine Government. A plan which, while affording scope for the activities of freedom, guides that freedom by presenting to the intellect and emotion such indications of Might and Wisdom as content the pure desires of our inner man; and bring us back to that loving voluntary obedience from which evil had caused us to wander. Such a plan, in the whole and in every part, is essentially miraculous. That is not all—Doubtless, the Maker of the world has other reasons for innovating on His usual modes of working besides that of persuading one section of His creatures to assent to one portion of His will. We are not acquainted with the whole design of miracles. In some of those wrought by Elisha, there is an element of what, in a non-sacred

subject, we should call caprice: and this seems to show that we do not know all about their object. We are sure that they concern and confirm our faith, we think that they are in connection with transactions which are wide as the universe, and with a future which surpasses all our thought, and we adapt our language to the narrow range of our understanding.

THOUGHT XXIX.

REALITIES OF THE FUTURE LIFE.

Respice Finem.

"There is a history in all men's lives
Figuring the nature of the time deceased;
The which observ'd, a man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the main chance of things,
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
And weak beginnings lie intreasured."

SHAKESPEARE, *Henry IV., Part II.*

"O bona patria, lumina sobria te speculantur—
* * * * *
Hic breve vivitur, hic breve plangitur, hic breve fletur;
Non breve vivere, non breve plangere, retribuetur."

CONVICTION that moral scepticism is spiritual paralysis, fated to end in misery, calls for another Thought concerning the realities of our future life.

Christ, whose life was "poetry put into action," came to bring healing for the black malady of sin, and enable men to possess the powers of the world to come. He would have us be bold inquirers and accurate reasoners, proving all things and holding fast that which is good. "Dubitare licet de rebus quas neque sensu neque ratione percepimus" (S. Augustine);

"νῆφε καὶ μέμνησ' ἀπιστεῖν· ἄρθρα ταῦτα τῶν φρενῶν."

EPICHARMUS.

He invites and warrants our wonder, our love, our exultation, about the infinite, the unseen, the future. We are to glory in the power of faith, in the gladness of thanksgiving, in the beauty of obedience, in the sanctity of worship. Look at the men who live apart from Christ if you would know the work He has to do. They are very much the same in all ages. Some, through scepticism, discern nothing but mechanism in the world; and altogether miss the wonderful open secret (Acts xiv. 16, 17; Rom. i. 20). Witchcraft is better. Carlyle says, "Witchcraft worshipped at least a living devil; but this worships a dead iron devil." Other men, for ever seeking pleasure, are miserable, self-deceived, whose transgressing way is unspeakably harder than all the discipline that leads to life. The cheat and the knave, chartered by Satan, eat, drink, and are merry, not knowing that their revelries are a Dance of Death. Trivialities of the human race, light-chafers, fire-flies, flickering in vanity, by their own lusts are affixed to iniquities. Of another sort, Frederick Faber said, "Some men seem to speak, as if the world were full of the fires of an over-fervent charity, and it were their duty perpetually to pour upon it the cold water of an earthly prudence." Of poor creatures like these, Christ could and would make something; but they resist with all their might. Their irreligion is obstinate silliness. They say, "The greater our knowledge, the greater our doubt; the deeper we go, the less easy it is to obtain soundings;" yet,—doubtful as to being right themselves, they are sure that the ancient saints were wrong. They are not able, though they boast that physical science controverts religion, to advance any new discoveries against the Faith. In

scientific subtilty, crafty innuendo, boldness of invective, they do not exceed ancient impiety. All their arguments are of old, and controverted; yet, still, they remain unbelievers. The subtle metaphysical Eastern, the strong-minded African, the imaginative Greek, the practical Roman, the bigoted Jew, were masters in every kind of intellectual exercise against the Faith, and did all that unbelief could accomplish; but Christianity triumphed. Lucretius is still master amongst modern materialists. Lucian classed Christianity with every kind of fraud and fanaticism: it was proved that he lied. Celsus, using Jewish stores, was witty with all that profanity could command: larger learning and truer wit conquered him. Porphyry, the pupil of Longinus, with intellectual sophistry, refused all but that which belonged to matter and its operations: his folly was made evident by various Christian Apologists. Hierocles who imitated and perverted Holy Scripture; the superstitious multitude who were ignorant of Scripture; the interested artisan, the greedy governor, the jealous emperor, who fought against Christ; have passed into oblivion—Christ and His Truth remain. None but Christly men have nerve and brain to realize the ineffable mysteries of the Divine Presence and of the Unseen World.

Whoever would be an able man—a reality in future life—the true nobleman, a man of worth—that is of worship; have faculty to be a knowing one—the king-man, König, which means can-ning, able man (Carlyle); let him go to Christ for that spirituality which gives light and power to the intellectual faculties. Christ brings men out from that narrow individuality, which constitutes the animal, into the universal thought or

reason which comprehends all: He enables them to know themselves by transcending themselves. Those who think that they can make a good time on the earth, by levelling all the great men to the puniness of little men's low degree; will of course prattle about blessed equality—

> "Unjust thou sayest,
> Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
> And equals over equals to let reign;"
>
> *Paradise Lost*, v. 818.

being so silly as not to know that it is impossible to find one wise man in a host of innumerable foolish creatures. If let alone, they would yet more diminish themselves; but Christ, by His Doctrine and Spirit, gives them—despite their unbelief, a capacity to possess powers by which they can lay hold of the world to come: that, in their nature, as conscious spiritual beings, which constitutes a potential infinitude. Then, possessing this divine influence, they may, if they will, become a blessing to themselves and to their country. When all men are thus influenced and empowered, have an ambition to do good, to raise the wretched as well as to rise, the reign spoken of by science as the kingdom of man will be established. Scripture more truly calls it the Kingdom of Christ, and Reign of the Saints.

On first looking out from our heart into the night, scepticism seems a pall of darkness enshrouding a dead world; but, more intently viewing the great vault of immensity—"omne immensum," we learn to trust Him who supports all that, and are comforted. The design of the Designer does not begin at the end instead of the beginning. His plan of progression includes a race

of rational beings, varying with gradations. Ploughed with this thought, the earth becomes a very harvest-field, where the yellow corn bending every golden head is figure of the Bread of God that comes down from Heaven, and our soul's sustenance is felt to be very nigh. Every finite brings a lesson of the Infinite—

> "Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything."
> SHAKESPEARE, *As You Like It*, Act ii. sc. 1.

"That little bird," said Luther, "above it are the stars and deep heaven of worlds; yet its little wings are folded; it goes trustfully to rest in its home—the Maker has given it a home." We too have a Home. When our sojourning and wayfaring are accomplished, we shall be at Home in our Father's House. Then we shall retrace all the steps in the process by which our spirit rose to the knowledge of God, and find in Him the fulfilment of our own highest nature.

We cannot avoid thinking of our Home, and why should we try? The thought is fascinating and maintainable, makes us happier, better, wiser men.

> "Home is the sacred refuge of our life."
> DRYDEN.

> "By its own instinct driven,
> The soul aspires to heaven,
> And seeks the source of its celestial birth:
> Impatient soars away
> From its associate clay,
> And from the dull companionship of earth:
> Permitted for a while to roam
> In the Eternal world, its destined, proper home."
> J. S. SPENCER, *Dips into Nature* (1872).

"Was könnte mich retten, wärst du nicht, gottliche

Phantasie, und gäbzt mir der bessern Zukunft sichere Ahnung?" (Schleiermacher, "Monologen.")

Looking upon living things, we behold them passing into death; whence, as if to fulfil the yearnings of our heart, they issue in new forms of being and existence—proving that death is change, not destruction. The component elements of every organism are separated and dissipated; metals and rocks dissolve, little by little, into thin air; but only to be re-formed—nothing is lost. The sun, flooding the hills with splendour, wastes no sparklet nor ray of light. Nature does not beam her brightest smiles upon our countenance, and then deceitfully bear us to realms of outer darkness. We are not sparks and flashes merely betokening that heat which endureth but for a moment. What does the moral stage denote, unless it be a sign and proof that man is an immortal being? Nor is that all: "The postulates of pure reason proceed from the principle of morality, and are Immortality, Liberty positively considered, and the Existence of God" (Kant's "Critical Inquiry"). The nature of man involves these two things—1, of exceeding his own individuality—thinking of transferring himself to that which lies beyond himself; 2, of finding a reason, an intelligibleness in nature, as its ultimate explanation. Thus he is assured of present and future reality as to his own existence. Physical science confirms this philosophy. Our dying, and we die daily, is for renewal of the living substance; and, so dying, behold, we live! This miracle of life ought to be more fully proclaimed by men of science. They ought to tell us plainly, that in the proportion we neglect our intellectual and devotional faculties we thwart and traverse our destiny, and mar

even our physical welfare. The present time and place and state are a nursery ground for future variety; and as all life came from precedent life, intelligence from higher Intelligence, our personality from an essential Person, so our life, intelligence, personality—capable of elevation the perfect attainment of which on earth seems almost impossible—pass into the wider life, greater intelligence, more wonderful personality, for fulfilment of our glorious destiny. Of this destiny we are assured by our boundless possibility of advancement to a standard of excellence which throws contempt on our highest actual attainments.

"Our hopes in heaven do dwell.

* * * * *

O Time, thou must untangle this, not I;
It is too hard a knot for me to untie."

SHAKESPEARE.

Nevertheless, we will exercise ourselves as to some of the realities:—The ages to come will reveal a personal experience of which we have now but the very faintest trace in analogy. We search, weigh, analyze, the most distant orbs. We unwrap the sun, take off coat after coat, and know him better than some men know the country wherein they live. In our brighter forms of thinking, there is the intuition, the spring, the flash of thought. We call it inspiration, so it is: all our true thought and knowledge are hints of wondrous disclosures in the future. Moses' face received a gleam of what God's glory will communicate in our higher state and place. Paul will find outlet for his zeal; Apollos for his eloquence; John, the Divine, will not be the same as Philip or Matthew—to every precious stone will be

its several tint. Various and peculiar fascinations spread over the Paradise of God, and give zest to the services of heaven. The new song of the Holy Land is a commemorative song, past endurances add exquisiteness to the triumphal strain. To the spirit-body, that outward covering of the ransomed soul, distance and time will scarce be known: eternal beings have infinitude as home. Nothing is lost; truth taken into the heart prepares us for enduring honour and power. We shall all attain our right place in heaven, or right place not in heaven; every one in perfection, or in degradation; the judgment is just and good. We shall be ourselves, in our true colours, and as we make ourselves; yet, with it all a fashioning of God for exquisite perfection of the saints. Every present thought and feeling is a painting stroke of our likeness that is to be, and with present acts we fresco the chambers of our eternal home. Moments, hours, years, silently form in this life's darkness that soul's structure whose proportions will be revealed in the sunlight of eternity; and that unseen world bears the same relation to all the seen as the created material universe of Almighty God to the peasant's lowly dwelling.

Those who call this romance may proceed to soberer thought concerning our progress towards the Supreme. Indestructibility is not the attribute of matter only; our faculties of thought, of love, of virtue, of progressive holiness, are better things; and the better do not die while the worse live on. These better, in fact, are the cause of harmonious progress and development in all, enriching even our physical organization. Those worse we take up, as it were, from the ground; the better we take, so to speak, from heaven; thus we belong to two

worlds—pilgrims through the present unto permanent dwellings in the future. We say with Shakespeare—

"In prison we have spent a pilgrimage."

We combine in the mortal body the inorganic and organic substance of the universe, resemble the lowest animals; yet excel the highest in the wonders of our sensational, intellectual, emotional life. If we develop all the elements of our nature, earthly perfection will ultimately adorn our earthly destiny; and the full height of culture enable every man to say, "In God I live, and move, and have my being."

In our frame is exhibited the direct action of spirit on matter—a continual miracle—turning the dull, cold, insensate clods of earth into bright, warm, intelligent existence. Then, with long labour and deep thought, we aim by faith, by prayer, by holy obedience, to carry this intelligence to the wisdom that is above the earth for a divine beautifying; thus, day by day, we may be said to glorify the lower world, bringing it within the reach and range of mental and spiritual capacity; climbing into the power seemingly inconceivable, sometimes even the power of accomplishing miracles and prodigies—not belying but, in truth, verifying the course of nature; so that we are fellow-workers of the Most High.

This re-creation has another and a higher counterpart. Our natural person becomes a spiritual person: by imitating those grand types and patterns of men which God gave in early history, and influenced by Christ's Person, through the Incarnation, the God-man's nature—

"Ce que l'univers est pour l'œil de l'homme,
Jésus Christ est pour l'œil du Chrétien;"

LACORDAIRE.

we are won to conscious union with God, who dwells in our own substance. It was before this Godhead, shrined in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, weeping over their graves, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudice of the Jew, the scepticism of the Greek, the pride of the Roman, were humbled in the dust. He made, He makes new men. Persons even in the lowest depths of poverty are rendered independent of a poor earthly fate, and that independence is better than prosperity. By this process of spiritual creation we pass into the God-Nature which has come down into ours. We enter Divine Life, that not on earth only, but in grander spheres, we may represent the wonder and beauty of the advance, the elevation, the perfection of Humanity.

The Christly process of raising men is greatly hindered by unbelief (Mark vi. 5, 6). Because of this unbelief, Christ can as yet do none of His greatest works. Unbelief turns the soul into a dark cavern. In many a dark cavern the drops that trickle within harden after they fall. The work of former sins, the tears of former passions, the congealings of present impiety, make the soul to be that than which nothing is more cold, nothing more hard. Even miracles are not believed in, though the universe is one splendid miracle. Men, nevertheless, want miracles to enforce faith, enchain reason, coerce affection, compel conscience—"Let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him" (Matt. xxvii. 42). They forget that if God so worked, and miracles so impelled, there would be no voluntary human co-operation with the Divine, no response of will—of love—of intelligence—to holy motions. Let men take to heart the fact, that the Christly process is moral,

spiritual, voluntary, in all on whom it is wrought. Let them aim at childlike trust in the Great Father, let them walk in the steps of His Holy Son, let them ask for the influence of the Eternal Spirit, and all true saving doctrine shall come into them, as the fruit of that doing, to be the seed of works yet more wonderful. In doing, they will find a cure for unbelief; find that in their own sphere they are demiurges, able to do much; discern that they, themselves, being forces and causes in the cosmos, it is no diminution to the majesty of One Eternal Will that there should be many other free but finite powers, who arrange their forces in our little planet, some for good, some for evil. They will understand that even a Solomon, who allows a thirst for sensual pleasure to be companion of his wisdom, lies down in sorrow; that Virtue, though in rags, is led to honour—but Vice, though in purple, is exposed to everlasting shame.

The Christly process has been refused, and is still resisted, by the race chosen to manifest Christ's Person; and through their unfaith, continued and confirmed by our own unwisdom, want of zeal and love, two-thirds of mankind remain almost untouched by the divine consecration. We present no theory, not even a guess—

"σοφώτερ' ἢ κατ' ἄνδρα συμβαλεῖν,"

EURIPIDES, *Frag. Pel.*

as to the reason or purpose of this; but call to mind the length of past time during which we have been in continuous development as conscious beings, recollect the vast previous period occupied in fitting the earth to become our dwelling, and so find firm ground, even in the difficulty itself, for belief that we form a mysterious

part in some grand process; and that when we have attained our improved condition we shall look back in remembrance of this, and know even as we are known. The Supreme must be indeed Almighty, His work must prevail, though, at present, hindered by man and marred by Satan. It is time that our spirit cease to strive against Him who seeks to do us good, time that we be willing and obedient (1 Pet. iv. 3).

The Christly process has been hindered also by an Evil Principle of stupendous power. Nothing less than such a Spirit of Evil can account for nature's evils, man's iniquities, and the comparatively little fruit resulting from the glorious Gospel. We find evil woven into all things by a plan most intricate and elaborate;

> "The web of our life is of a mingled yarn,
> Good and evil together;"
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

matter, and all its elements; life, and all its sensations; intelligence, and all its thoughts; conscience, and all its emotions; are subject to a process by which good is marred, life is slain, intelligence is degraded, the conscience is defiled. Evil, rooted in the foundation of the earth, grew up, and is now in every part. It could not originate in inert matter, was not life's fault, nor an error of human intelligence: for it is an active spirit, was manifested before life began, and abused human intelligence—so soon as human intelligence existed. It is not merely waste, so called, such as destroys the two hundred millions of ova in a single female fish that, otherwise, would replenish the seas; not that check of possible life, nor that ineffectuality of so many rudiments, which prevent the overflow of existence; it is something deeper.

It is part of that deception which, though Nature is essentially true to herself, often makes evil seem good, and good evil; truth appear to be error, and error to be truth. It is not the error despite which we rub along as well as we can, but it largely enters the fallacy which prevents even scientific minds discerning that unity in diversity and diversity in unity is the great principle by which the Great Cause conducts to individual perfection and to universal harmony. It is the abuse of that freedom almost universally bestowed on every creature for progress in the measure of its capacity. Freedom—so used by Nature that she seems to do all things of herself, and so mistaken by a few scientists that they think she does all things of herself. Freedom—so perverted by intelligent beings, whether human or angelic, that finite will and self set themselves against the Infinite. Freedom—whether for good or evil, only limited by the finite nature of created things. How wonderful and all-pervading the freedom is may be discerned in various facts. The changes produced by heat in even so apparently simple a substance as iron are so numerous as to produce the impression that the metal is endowed with vitality (Jevons, "Principles of Science," vol. ii. p. 452). A slightly abraded crystal of alum, dipped for a moment into a saturated aqueous solution of that salt, completely repairs the injured parts. The self-repairing power is in part like that of a bone, a muscle, a nerve, each of which will only take from the blood its proper ingredients. Brewster noticed that, in the complex formation of apophyllite and analcime, the laws are more like those in living structures than in crystalline formations (*Philosophical Magazine*, vol. v. (1853), pp. 17–27). Substances in general

possess the property of enabling one force to produce a number of simultaneous effects. A selective power sometimes mechanical, crystalline, vital, mental, emotional, of infinitesimal minuteness, of infinite magnitude, of all-embracing complexity, makes the universe like a vast organism. In all similarity is difference, in all difference is relation. Everywhere is an automatism, often divergent from unity, which the Principle of Causation blends to form a harmonious whole. The fact receives curious illustration amongst men. Mental history presents few sadder spectacles than that afforded by the convulsive contortions, the almost incredible feats of ingenuity performed by unbelief to liberate itself from evil—this torture-chamber of the soul. Thousands have charged Infinite Goodness and Illimitable Power with the creation of evil. Hume ("Essays," vol. iii.) says, "To prove that God is not the author of sin, is what has hitherto surpassed all the powers of philosophy." Thousands have made shipwreck of their faith, truthfulness, life, by wilfully yielding to evil—not manfully resisting it.

"Et mihi res, non me rebus, subjungere conor."

HORACE.

"Men at some time are masters of their fate."

SHAKESPEARE.

The problem is not wholly insoluble by humanity. If we assume—for in a sense we know—that there is freedom in our world, and freedom in the universe, and that by grievous error evil is chosen rather than good, light breaks in. The explanation afforded by matured thought is that of our great poet: one or more free beings, in some world preceding our own, departed by wilful dis-

obedience from uprightness; and in course of time that evil extended to our earth in its substance, its life, its intelligence, its conscience.

> "The first sort by their own suggestion fell
> Self-tempted, self-depraved: man falls, deceived
> By the other first."
>
> *Paradise Lost*, iii. 129.

This evil is not an essential part of the Divine Plan: indeed, is no part of it, is opposed to it, and can only be explained as caused by the wilful error of free responsible creatures: otherwise, God is the author of evil, which is absurd; for, in that case, He would act against Himself. We make half our difficulties, as to the mystery, by misunderstanding the word "Omnipotent." God gives freedom—"'Tis in ourselves we are thus or thus; our bodies are our gardens, to which our wills are gardeners" (Shakespeare). If freedom is a real gift, all consequences must be included; and that freedom may be free not even evil, though foreseen, can be overruled—except by forbidding, and presenting to the free erring creatures moral, not physical persuasion, for voluntary acceptance—not coercive enforcement.

> "Sufficient to have stood though free to fall.
>
> * * * * *
>
> By nature free, not overruled by fate
> Inextricable or strict necessity."
>
> *Paradise Lost*, iii. 99, v. 525.

It is not well to say, "God cannot;" but we know that God will not depart from those limitations and conditions which His own Wisdom imposes upon His own Might—"Nor can that be a diminution of God's omnipotency, the contrary whereof would be a proof of

His impotency" (Pearson on the Creed, art. vi.). "Deus omnipotens qui id solum non potest, quod non vult" (S. Augustine). We cannot deny the sorrowful events which surround our life, but it is greatly in our power to ameliorate them for ourselves and for others; and not only is Virtue more exempt than Vice from the ills of life, but always contains within herself an energy to resist them; and we well know that whether in allowing evil, or taking evil away, God will not act in opposition to our own moral sense. Glorification of all things, beatification of every intelligence, may be fairly placed amongst the essentials; but evil, as the product of freedom in rebellion, could not be a matter of fate; and, though foreseen, was not in the Almighty's plan, but against it; otherwise freedom were not freedom. Our poet well puts it in the name of God—

> "They themselves decreed
> Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
> Foreknowledge had no influence on their fate."
>
> *Paradise Lost*, iii. 16.

Evil, then, is abnormal; which we may further see by Butler's thought: "Man may act according to that inclination which for the present happens to be strongest, and yet act in a way disproportionate to and violate his real proper nature . . . such an action is in the strictest and most proper sense unnatural" ("Sermon on Human Nature"). Origen and Gregory of Nyssa regarded evil as οὐκ ὄν; thus they avoided the production of evil by God.

> "Deus ultor peccati, non auctor."

Evil, not finding a remedy in the original constitution of things, necessitated new and further displays of Divine

wisdom and mercy and might. Müller ("The Christian Doctrine of Sin") wrote, "The exclusion of sin from the Divine causation by the doctrine of Redemption represents an act of Divine grace: which, according to its subjective side, realizes itself as forgiveness of sins; according to its objective side, becomes mediated by the expiatory sacrifice of the Redeemer." As Shakespeare says, "The strawberry groweth under the nettle." This divine and saving grace was manifested by Christ, the Lamb of God, appointed before the foundation of the world as the Divine Sacrifice for sin. Origen (Hom. i. Levit.) says, "The altar was at Jerusalem, but the victim salted the whole world." These truths became Revelation in Holy Scripture; and become part of our life in that all-embracing providential scheme which, little by little, is conducting our earth to a greater than the original good; the whole spiritual process allowing perfecting and securing freedom to responsible intelligence. "Regardez, de près, et déjà vous reconnâitrez une main réparatrice" (Le Maistre, "Soirées de St. Petersbourg"). If science has a new Gospel; a better remedial, all-embracing, providential scheme, for the removal of deception and degradation from mankind; we will reverentially listen.

Meanwhile, we wait for that miracle completing all miracles: bringing the world and worlds into a state so refined that the dust of our streets shall be as dust of gold—a glorification of nature, of life, of intelligence.

The Glorification of Nature.

The present earth is a microphone: its sounds, that we thought were stilled in space and time, reverberate through infinitude for ever. He who stealthily walks in

sin, that his footsteps may fall light as the tread of a fly, will find every one loud as war-horse tramp. In vain did Macbeth say—

> "Thou sun and firm-set earth,
> Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
> The very stones prate of my whereabout."

He who, doing good, telleth not to left hand what the right performs, shall have the good proclaimed for universal renown. In all matter, in all life, in all intelligence, are seeds;

> "Semina, Primordia, rerum Principia;"
>
> LUCRET.

that everything may, according to its kind, produce a better or a baser sort. Everywhere is involution, everywhere is evolution. Matter—in crystalline form, or in crystals—entering, as ground substance, into life; or moulded into receptacles for intelligence—may be considered as passing from the inorganic to the organic, from life to intelligence, by successive wonderful transitions. Streams that lisp to the stones, leaves that talk to the breeze, ocean looking at the sun through the face of gleaming waves, the whole earth, will be made of solemn beauty, glowing, as by transaction of fire. The melting, the burning up, the dissolution, are that passing away of evil from all things which renders the new heaven and earth very glorious (2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xxi. 1).

> "Guardando nel suo Figlio con l'amore
> Che l'uno e l'altro eternalmente spira
> Lo primo ed ineffabile Valore,
> Quanto per mente o per occhio si gira,
> Con tanto ordine fe', ch' esser non puote
> Senza gustar di lui chi ciò rimira."
>
> DANTE, *Paradiso.*

The Glorification of Life.

Life—so warm, so active, so sensitive, so low, so high, so minute, so majestic, of which the microscopic points may be far higher and grander than those we count the middle term; life—reaching down from Him, in whom all life is, to that in which life is as though it were not; shall quicken and glorify in every rhythm of existence till the universe is quick with the life of God. The low life working blindly into sight; the dead, not yet life, warming into lively glow; the structureless gaining structure; the indifferentiated winning differentiation of part for particular and special use; miracles of vitality. These are only the small parts of our bliss. There may be crowns of splendour, there may be trees of unfading beauty, there may be "riches of Heaven's pavement trodden gold," gardens of loveliness, palaces of proud and stately decoration, rivers flowing in unceasing gladness.

> "Devenere locos lætos, et amœna virecta
> Fortunatorum nemorum, sedesque beatas."
>
> VIRGIL, *Æneid*, vi.

One trembles at the Divinity in the Old Book declaring that we men, now being tried and purified for such a splendid destiny, are taken from the ground; and one rejoices in the fact that science has found it true; and, probably, will soon verify every other statement. Our fear and our joy make us better men. The wonders, wrought in us, do not stand alone, prodigies are everywhere—the fins of the fish are the limbs of the lizard and parts of the bird by a Divinely wonderful advance! Other marvels—we trace the eye, the ear, the mouth, the brain, from rudiments in creatures only beginning to be; so that eye, ear, mouth, brain, are beautiful and in-

telligible products wrought in and by things without intelligence; and these products are in adjustment with an outer world of light—of sound—of flavours—of intricate design—all so interwoven with action and counteraction, equilibrium and ceaseless activity, that only Might everywhere, only Wisdom everywhere, only Life everywhere, are the due correlation of a life and universe so miraculously wonderful, so mysteriously advancing to a future so glorious!

The Glorification of Intelligence.

Intelligence will become yet more clear, far-sighted, all-revealing—the light of God. By it even now we overtake suns and stars, with swifter velocity surpass their speed,

"ὡσεὶ πτέρον ἠὲ νόημα·"

HOMER, *Odyssey*, H. 36.

with more might subdue their course, by measurement define their limits. "Liberæ sunt cogitationes nostræ, et quæ volunt sic intuentur, ut ea cernimus quæ videmus" (Cicero, "Pro. Mil.," ch. 29). Intelligence is the bright ladder of our ascent from grade to grade of being, from height to height of understanding, from world to world of existence, from the corporeal to the spiritual, from the natural to the Supernatural, from the creature to the Creator, from time to Eternity, from space to Infinitude.

"Wie alles sich zum Ganzen webt,
Eins in dem andern wirkt und lebt!
Wie Himmelskräfte auf und nieder steigen,
Und sich die goldnen Eimer reichen!
Mit segenduftenden Schwingen
Vom Himmel durch die Erde dringen,
Harmonisch all' das All durchklingen."

Faust, Act i.

As the ascent of thought reveals a wonderful future,

so the descent of thought verifies a not less marvellous advance in the past: from man downward—ever and ever lower, through animal figures, through vegetal forms, through crystal shapes, to the amorphous and structureless, to a lesser shining and ever less, until in nothingness darkness finds abode. What a clue is that, nothingness! which can never be untwined by the imaginations of men and angels. In that nothingness, the Ancient of days who antedates antiquity, the beginningless infinite God, possessing a twofold eternity—as to the past without beginning, as to the future without end, became in a manner visible by making the visible world. There is nothing more wonderful than the creation of this huge frame of heaven and earth. The structureless takes structure, organism is woven by life, intelligent work is manifested—the work of Intelligence. In every earth and metal, in every crystal and grass-blade, in phosphorescent gleam, in the darklings of creatures hardly beginning to live, in the sparklings of instinct, in the clearer more continuous light piercing the space between brute-reason and human understanding, onward to the radiance of blessed genius, piety, and the bestowal of every power for use of the Holy One, we trace the mind—the will—the operation of Supreme Intelligence. Supreme Intelligence not working without the co-operation of everything as He makes it, not without the intervention of laws as He gives them subsistence by His infinite understanding, and not without translation of our own human effort into willingness and ability to entertain the honour and happiness of fellowship with God. A will here, a thought there, a word to this, a deed for that; so we become His agents on

earth, and shall be made His angels in Heaven. O man, toiling in humble drudgery, toil on: make thy toil a joy!

> "For never anything can be amiss,
> When simpleness and duty tender it."
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

Thoughtful, anxious, troubled soul, look not so continually on the ground: draw supply from the everlasting hills, through the channels of love and contemplation! Journey as George Herbert—"I travelled on, seeing the hills where lay my expectation." Oh, you that are in darkness, can you not seek light in the fulness of the Creator, in the spiritual glories of the Holy and Perfect? Strive to restore the lost image of the Godhead in you, be of character kindred to His, endeavour to delight in prayer, and let your imagination kindle in beatific foretaste of Heaven—"the greatness and strangeness of the beatific vision" (Dr. South). So shall you be fitted for glorious service: there may be missions of mercy to rescue the perishing—who knows? The despairing may have still to be reached, apostles of consolation may yet be required, and you go forth to instruct, to fight and conquer evil, to guide even worlds out of darkness into marvellous light. A miraculous work—a wonderful, thrilling, glorious destiny!

Does not Holy Scripture reveal three cycles of miracles in the universe to be succeeded by an eternity of surpassing splendour? Creation by the Father (Gen. i. 1); Redemption by the Son (Rom. viii. 18–23); Sanctification by the Holy Ghost (Hab. ii. 14); Creation, Redemption, Sanctification, consummated in some other more glorious manifestation of God (1 Cor. xv. 28). In the miracles of Creation, power and wisdom are set forth

—but the world moves not straight on. Evil struggles to make all things crooked, and would pervert every step. Life springs from death, only thither to return. Sin, sadness, strife, prove that at some time, from some whither, came hindrance and perversion (Rom. viii. 20, 21). The miracles of Redemption are part of a process to nullify this disturbance, to plant the germs of a new creation in the old, that sin and death be overcome, the old be made new, and all things reunited to God. By the Incarnation of Christ, that assumption of fleshly material world-elements into the purgative suffering atoning body of the Messiah, all things in heaven and earth are gathered into One—even in Him (Eph. i. 10). The miracles of Sanctification apply to the hearts and minds of intelligent responsible creatures, those charities of Heaven which are to sweeten the whole of life (Isa. lv. 13; Rev. xxi. 1–5). What miracles will accompany, what Divine Revelations manifest God as all in all, we know not (1 Cor. iii. 23, xi. 3, xv. 28).

In this threefold mystery of miracles are fiats of beginnings, of special crises, of endings, establishment of laws for rule of work, and adaptation of means to ends, seen in natural operation. They show that natural operation is not of itself, that the essence of every existence and of every act lies in mystery, whither all our knowledge tends—tends step by step. For example —The laws of crystallography seem to require the existence of ultimate minute atoms; solids, fluids, gases, are congeries of molecules formed of these atoms.* The

* Two million atoms of hydrogen occupy $\frac{1}{25}$th of an inch in space, 200,000,000,000,000,000,000 weigh $\frac{1}{33}$th of a grain, and we think that there are particles of matter as much smaller than gaseous molecules as these are than those of solid bodies.

laws of biology require the existence of minute vital molecules, protoplasm, of which are all living things by exquisite construction.* The laws of cosmology require throughout all matter, inorganic and organic, and through all space—we know far at least as the furthest star—a medium like, yet unlike matter, which links worlds, and without which were no motion, nor heat, nor light, nor life. No finite mind can fully conceive the Intricacy, the Marvel, the Beauty, of these operations by law. The Intricacy—atoms are of various sizes, definite peculiarities, hidden essence; every one opening into a mystery which is vast and incomprehensible as the whole planetary system astronomically considered. For unity and diversity they join and disjoin, with infinite variation of arrangement to form the inconceivably small and the immeasurably great. The Marvel—unexpected adaptations, unforeseen laws, new powers, ever spring into view. Organic germs potentially contain the material frame, mechanical adjustment, wants, instincts, passions, character, mental attributes, and power of successive generations until the end of time. They sway, and are swayed by, all other things, living and unliving, in the universe. The Beauty—delicacy of texture and varied form of microscopic objects and growths ravish our sight. Within every point of matter and space we discern golden stars and spheres set within infinitesimal depths, as if in contrast to those in the vast blue dome of still clear night. Throughout the inconceivably small, the immeasurably

* The smallest visible organic matter is less than $\frac{1}{10000}$th of an inch in diameter. Every one has properties of its own, is capable of development, and seems to have been derived from a parent stock more or less like itself. This smallest organized molecule, visible under the microscope, contains about two million particles of organic matter.

great, in the Intricacy, the Marvel, the Beauty, God is the highest scientific generalization—the solution of all mystery—

> ". . . The one life within us and abroad,
> Which meets all motions and becomes its soul,
> A light in sound, a sound-like power in light."
>
> COLERIDGE, *Æolian Harp.*

The mystery of matter has its counterpart in the mystery of mind.

All intelligence witnesses of God. To Him life's joyous and plaintive numbers flow. The old unhappy far-off things, and ancient battles, are turned to greater good by far more enduring benedictions. Else, why the music in our heart; music, the echo of olden melody; or prelude of harmony yet to come; and why the high instincts, master light of all our seeing? The greatest men in literature expressed the loftiest aspirations of our better nature when they wrote of God. Art giving to wondering generations the thoughts of Phidias, the pathos of Fra Angelico, the delicacy in design of Raphael, the brilliant colouring of Titian, the force of Michael Angelo, whether in portraying the best instincts and emotion of the child, or touching the tender chords of pure unselfish love in women, or depicting men's yearning for the good and noble, declared that the wisdom, beauty, love, it tried to realize was Divine. When skilled emotion and intelligence fix the light of sun on panel and on canvas, and learn by prism how is spread the rainbow; when we employ wood and metal, ivory and stone, and give form and life to the cold marble of Pentelicus; when we work on jewels from the mine, or in Egyptian deserts raise colossal stones; it is because we know that

things can be glorified, and translated into many forms. The golden light descending out of heaven—never lost, not even though passing unhindered into space; and when entering our own earth arraying all in beauty; has in all time and among all noble men been counted a worker for God.

> "The exhalations that now rise
> From hill or streaming lake, dusky or gray,
> Our sun doth paint their fleecy skirts
> In honour of the world's great Author."
>
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The leaves of the Book of Existence turn slowly, one whole lifetime can hardly catch the meaning of a word in a sentence on the page of universal being. However closely and intricately written, slow with imperceptible growth and unfolding of meaning, we read enough to discern that our every act of good or ill has

its own work and place in God Almighty's plan; and, day by day, we resume our labour conscious of a dignity —sure of a destiny supremely glorious! We shall meet in the presence of our brethren. Meanwhile, we ask God for that wisdom which from rough things of the common world shall raise an empire above earth and free from evil destiny; that our soul may never fall; that our courage may never fail; our fidelity never falter; that our life may be a triumph; our death—the birth of immortality!

* * * * *

"Lord, defend Thine own cause, and defend those who defend it! Stir up such as are faint; direct those that are willing; confirm those that waver; give wisdom and integrity to all; order all things so as may most redound to Thine own glory" (Algernon Sidney).

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